A GENERAL EPISTLE

TO

The Universall CHURCH

of the First BORN: Whose Names are written in HEAVEN.

Even to all the SAINTS, in the unitie of the SPIRIT: Grace, and Peace bee multiplyed.

Writren, by *Thomas Collyer.*

Teuding to the information of the judgement, and the binding up of those wounds, breaches, and divisions, amongst Christians; that so unitie and peace might be preserved.

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A Generall *EPISTLE*, TO The Universall *CHURCH* of the First Borne: whose Names are written in HEAVEN.

CHAPTER I.

The cause of Division discovered.

IT's not the least but the greatest mercie to be made one in the Fathers Love; and that Soul who knowes love from its being gathered up in love, and possest with love, can speake something of that love.

And deare Christians, Saints by calling, for to you I direct my speech, notwithstanding it hath been the Divine pleasure of the Father, not only to manifest to, but to shedde abroad his love in your hearts by the Spirit: yet I observe what by my owne experience, and what I have seen in other *Christians*, much confusion in the knowledge of the things of God.

Having some experience of this Babylon within my selfe, I could not but declare unto you, my apprehensions concerning it; and what I shall here write unto you, I question not, but that it may through the Heavenly Spirit, tend to satisfaction and peace, I shall mind you.

First, What I judge to be the cause of this confusion.

Secondly, what the remedy.

Thirdly, That the knowledge of this remedy, will give satisfaction to the Soul, concerning the grounds of these many confusions.

First, What I judge to be the cause of so much division, and confusion amongst *Christians*.

1. Its ignorance in the knowledge of the Mysterie of God: or rather, the Mysterie who

who is God; the truth is, that we have had wonderful low and fleſhly apprehenſions of God, forming up a God, like our ſelves, although we acknowledge God to be a Spirit, and that he will have Spirituall Worſhip: yet we have had exceeding groſſe and fleſhly apprehenſions of him; and thus being ignorant of the Fountaine, we have met with little leſſe than confuſion, if not death, many times in the ſtreames: But I paſſe this Firſt Particular with brevity, becauſe I ſhall have occaſion to mention it more at large hereafter.

A Second cauſe, flowes from Creatures preſſing ſo much after, and living ſo much in thoſe ſtreames, which occaſions ſometimes internall troubles, ſometimes externall diviſions, flowing from ignorance in the Myſterie, which is GOD.

CHAP. II.

What GOD is not.

I Shall therefore proceed to the diſcovery of the Remedy, or rather of my know-

ledge in the myſtery of him, who is in himſelfe glorious, the knowledge of whom will put an end both to confuſion and diviſion, in and amongſt Chriſtians, and becauſe the apprehenſions of Chriſtians hath been very low, and for the moſt part beſides the truth; I ſhall therefore diſcover my apprehenſions concerning God.

Firſt, That he is, I need not in this place mention: But,

Secondly, what he is, and how he is.

Firſt, What he is in himſelfe, and becauſe of thoſe many confuſed apprehenſions in this particular, I ſhall firſt declare what he is not.

2. What he is.

1. What he is not; He is not, firſt, as ſome imagine, *Three Perſons, yet one God*, or three ſubſiſtings, diſtinguiſhed though not divided; Its altogether impoſſible to diſtinguiſh God in this manner, and not divide him; thus to diſtinguiſh is to divide; for three perſons are three not only diſtinguiſhed, but divided: Some ſay there is, *God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, yet not three, but one God*; Let any one judge if here be not three Gods, if three then not one; its true the Scripture ſpeakes, of *Father, Son* and *Spirit*,

Spirit, but it no where (as I know) mentions, God the Father, God the Sonne, and God the holy Ghoſt; its true the Scripture gives and that truly, theſe three denominations to God, *Father*, *Sonne* and *Spirit*; not that there are three perſons or ſubſiſtings in God, this cannot be imagined without blaſphemy againſt God; but rather diſtinct and ſeverall making known of one and the ſame ſubſiſting unto the ſonnes of men: I ſhall therefore diſcover my apprehenſions in this particular, and I thinke that I have the Spirit of God.

Firſt, That he is called the *Father*, as he is purely God, of himſelfe and in himſelfe the glory, riſe, and fountain of all our good, and ſo of and from himſelfe brings forth glorious diſpenſations and manifeſtations of *Love* unto the ſonnes of men, ſo that in a word, He is the *Father*, as he is the riſe, and fountain of all Good, as he drawes ſoules to himſelfe, ſo making them partakers of himſelfe.

Secondly, He is ſaid to be the *Sonne*, either firſt in relation to the worke of Creation, Redemption, and ſo of manifeſtation of his *Love* unto the ſonnes of men; or elſe,

2. In relation of his taking man into union

nion with himself, that so, in and through man he might commend *Love* unto man; and thus is he said to be the *Sonne*, and the bloud of Christ, is said to be *The bloud of God.* *Acts* 20. and so his body must be the body of *God*, that is, The body that was taken into union with God, by which meanes he beares the denomination of *Sonne*, so that he is the *Son*, by his union with man.

Object. *Is not Christ the Son by eternall generation?*

Ans. Its true, some say he is so, but I see no truth in it, nor any ground for Faith to believe it; for generation is not from eternall; for in the worke of generation or begetting, he that generates or begets, is before him that is begotten, and so the *Father* is before the *Sonne*, if this be truth; and one God begets and brings forth another in his owne likeness; if this be truth let the spirituall man judge. Its objected again,

That Christ must needs be God distinct from the Father, with relation to satisfaction; the Father was offended; Christ who is the Sonne must be God distinct from the Father, that so he might be able to satisfie the Fathers wrath, for none but God could satisfie God.

Ans. By this it seemes that there are two Gods,

Gods, one God offended, another God to o satisfie; which is no lesse than a destruction to the divine being, if it were possible so o doe; it is true, God satisfies God, but it is one and the same, not one offended and another satisfying; but that one God satisfies himselfe, and so makes knowne his *Love* to sinners.

Thirdly, God is called the *Spirit*, not only, first, in relation to his invisibility, and omnipresence in al places, which is only proper to a spirit: But,

2. In relation to his opperation in the Saints, and in the World, so he is the *Spirit*; *For God is a Spirit, and the Lord is that Spirit*: So that there are not three persons or subsistings, but one God under three discoveries; The Son is *The everlasting Father*, the *Father* is in the *Son*, and so he is the *Son*, the *Spirit* is God, and so he is both the *Father* & the *Son*.

Obj. *This is that the Scripture holds forth unto us*, and therefore we ought to believe it, although we cannot apprehend it.

Ans. First. the Scripture holds forth no other God but one.

2. Its true, the Scripture presents us with variety in unity, and unity in variety, yet but one subsisting; varieties of discoveries

ries of one and the ſame God, but not of ſubſiſtings or beings of that one God: This one God variouſly ſubſiſts, in the whole Creation, by which he gives being unto all, but yet he is but one ſubſiſting in this variety, this one God variouſly ſubſiſts, and operates in the ſpirits of Chriſtians, yet he is but one ſubſiſting in that variety.

Obj. *Its ſaid that there are three that beare record in Heaven, the Father, Word, and Spirit.*

Anſ. Its true, yet not three ſubſiſtings or Perſons, but one God made knowne under three denominations: Yet ſomething I ſhall minde further from theſe words.

1. Its ſaid, *There are three that beare record in Heaven, and three in Earth*: Thoſe three in Earth, I underſtand to be the low and earthly condition of creatures in the firſt act of believing; for Believers in the firſt manifeſtation of God unto them, are very low in their apprehenſions of God, and are often ſaid to be carnall and earthly; now Water, Bloud & Spirit bear witneſs in Earth, that is to the ſpirits of Chriſtians in their firſt believing; *Water*, that is ſome power againſt ſinne; *Bloud*, That is, the apprehenſion of the bloud of Chriſt; the *Spirit* operating and ſo agreeing in theſe, ſeals up comfort to a ſoule in

in a low condition : But the *Three in heaven*, that is in the high and glorious diſcovery and enjoyment of God, there the *Father, Word and Spirit bears witneſſe, and theſe three are one*; That is, The ſoule that dwels in Heaven, he ſees that notwithſtanding creatures have had ſuch confuſed apprehenſions of God.

And notwithſtanding God hath made himſelfe known under theſe three denominations, yet *Father, Word and Spirit* is all but one God ; and this one God is the witneſſe of *Love* to the Soule that dwels in Heaven, *&c.* So by this you may judge who are the blaſphemers, thoſe who ſay God is three Perſons , or thoſe who deny it, knowing him to be but one ſubſiſting.

Secondly, As he is not three perſons or ſubſiſtings, ſo likewiſe he is not one ſubſiſtance or ſubſtance compriſed into ſome particular place, as it is generally imagined, that God dwels in Heaven, that is in a place above the Skie, there he is eſſentially contained, and onely his power made knowne here below, not knowing that God is truly, really and eſſentially in all places, *&c.* But I paſſe to the ſecond, *What God is*.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

What GOD is.

GOD is one intire, invisible glorious being, filling all places with his presence, both Heaven, Earth, and Hel, not contained in any place, but is essentiall in every place, he is the Life, mystery and glory of all created beings, so that although he be not essentially any of those created beings, yet he is in all those, he is in all and through all, the life and glory of all, not as some imagine limited to some place essentially, and that his power upholds al; but I know no distinction between the essence and power of God, the wisdome, mercy and power of God is God, there is no division or distinction between God and his power; where the power is, there God is; God assumes no nominall attribute to himselfe, which is not himselfe, for there is no quality in God, but is God: So that these are but fleshly imaginations, to confine God into any locall place, and little differ from those who looke upon God as an old man, sitting in Heaven, bring-

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ing to paſſe his will on Earth; ſo others whom I judge not but many of them may be pretious, yet looke upon God as a Spirit or ſpirituall ſubſiſting ſitting in Heaven; that is in ſome locall place of Glory above the Firmament, manifeſting his Mercie, Wiſdome, Power, *&c.* here on Earth, not ſeeing God to be Mercie, Wiſdome, Power, and al good Eſſentially, that it is his being, his nature, which truly and eſſentially is in all places, filling all places with his preſence, though not to creatures apprehenſions, with his Glorious preſence: yet he is in hell, as well as in Heaven: in darkneſſe, as well as in Light; for he Creates both, *&c.*

CHAP. IV.

How GOD is in himſelfe.

THIS Inviſible, Omnipreſent, Omnipotent, Glorious Spirit, is in himſelfe, and of himſelfe, purely, perfectly, and unſpeakably Glorious; as he was before all things: ſo he is without all things, *viz.* all Created excellencies adds not to his being,

to

to his Glory, though he appeares Glorious in these to his Saints, and so is indeed admired in the hearts of al who rightly know him: yet it addes nothing to his Glory essentially; neither doe or can this God injoy any thing but himselfe in all the worke of Creation, nay, in the worke of Redemption, and Renovation too; there is nothing that he can enjoy, but himselfe, for there is nothing Spiritual but himselfe, nothing capable of the knowledge and enjoyment of himself, but himself, unles transformed into his own Glory by himself, and so made capable of being Spirituall, Eternall, and so of the enjoyment of himselfe, with, and in himselfe eternally.

Thus I apprehend God to be one entire, Glorious, invisible Being, purely and compleatly perfect in himselfe, without any addition by any Created Excellency, to his Glory; the whole Creation addes nothing to his Glory and perfection: but he is the perfection and Glory of the whole Creation, *even the new Creation*, though much more Spirituall and Glorious, yet addes nothing to his Glory, as to himselfe, but indeed makes him to shine with the more Lustre and Glory in the Spirits of his people, *&c.*

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

GOD in the SONNE.

NOtwithstanding GOD is in himselfe such a pure, perfect & Glorious being: yet he is pleased to make known Love, to low, fleshly, and carnall Creatures; And that he may effect his purpose in this particular:

He formes out himselfe as it were, in, or through diverse and various fleshly formes, or dispensations, according to the weak apprehensions of his Creatures; that so he may by himself in those formes, worke up Souls about all those fleshly dispensations, to live with, and in himselfe, above, and without all these formes, so that:

First, Although God be truly in, and of himselfe, yet he is in other things which are not himselfe, and not only in other things; for so he is in all but in other things manifest, and made known Spiritually to the Saints, as he is in himselfe.

And First, He is in his Sonne, that is, in relation to the Union of the two Natures,

he is in him as he is man: So by vertue of Union, God and man is become the Sonne; and so the Son is God blessed for ever.

But now I mind the Father, being in the Sonne, and so the Sonne, not so much with relation to the Union, and so the Son-ship. As the Son was a dispensation of the Father to the rest of his brethren, as in the power of the Father he dyed, and so satisfied the Law in the Letter, and so satisfieth the consciences of sinners, as he was the way through which the Father declared, and brings home Love to men.

Thus God was in Christ reconciling men to himselfe; and yet this dispensation of the Father, was but a fleshly dispensation, comparatively with a more Spirituall, though Glorious in it selfe, to Souls under that dispensation; this fleshly righteousnes, answering a fleshly transgression.

Thus likewise hath he given Ordinances answerable to this fleshly dispensation; wherein, when he pleaseth he appeares in, and through those Ordinances: yet note, that God never appeares in any fleshly dispensation to his people; that so, he might keep them in the flesh: but that through these, he might bring up Souls to himselfe,

in

in the Spirit. He appeares as it were in flesh, that so he might deliver us into the Spirit; this being Gods end from everlasting, in all his dispensations to the sons of men.

Hence it is, that Souls taught of God thus presse forward in that light and power, and nothing short of this perfection, can so satisfie them, as to rest in, or under any fleshly dispensation below, or without this perfection, no, not in the knowledge of *Christ*, after the flesh, &c. for by the one, we come to see our selves one with the Father in the Son, by the other, we see our selves one in the Father, with the Son.

CHAP. VI.

GOD in the SAINTS.

GOD, who is in himselfe, and in the Son, not only by Union, but as a dispensation of Grace to men, is likewise in the Saints, and that not as in other Creatures, or other men; but he is in the Saints, as he was in Christ.

First, He is in the Saints by Union, and

so they are Saints being truly made partakers of his Nature.

Hence it is they are called Christians, they are Christed, and indeed Christ and Christians make but one *Christ*, one anoynted, one God fils them both: so that Christ was not only a Glorious dispensation of the Father, to sinners, and a figure in his death, of what must be done to the fleshly part of the rest of his brethren, and in his Resurrection and Life, of our Resurrection in the Spirit with him; that so we might live the same life: but likewise he was a paterne of our perfection, of our Glory in every particular, wherein Saints Union with God appeares: But this particular of Saints Union, I have minded in a Treatise called *The Marrow of Christianity*, by reason of which, I passe it in this place with the more brevity, referring you unto it, only note it in these particulars.

First, Christ a Son by vertue of his Union: so the Saints.

Secondly, made partaker of the same Spirit.

Thirdly, of the same Divine Nature which is all one.

Although it be objected, that the Saints are

are made partakers of it by promise, *Christ* really: so was Christ by promise likewise.

First promised, then manifested:

So the Saints in the same nature.

First promised, then manifested; when God comes forth in them, heires to the same Inheritance, which is God, to the same Glory; and that in conclusion be compleated throughly in the same Unitie in all particulars: its so already truly, and they are as Christ, even in this World; although not compleatly and perfectly to their apprehensions manifested: nay questionlesse, many pretious souls can yet hardly believe their owne Glory.

Though this be the ultimate of all Gods dispensations to the sons of men, to bring them to this knowledge of God in them; that so they might live in him, above all distractions, troubles, feares; that so they might live to him purely in the spirit: yet for the most part, we live below the knowledge of this Glory, and even without Faith in this particular.

CHAP. VII.

Of the SAINTS Communion with GOD. And each with other.

UNION alwayes produceth Communion, and in truth its the ground of Communion, there is no true, reall Communion without it.

I shall minde a word, what it is to have Communion with God; because it is a word oftner expressed, than understood or distinguished; and truly brethren, its a glorious word, when a Soul is really not in fancie, but indeed possest with this Glory, to have Communion with the Father, and the Son.

I shall unfold this Mysterie of Saints communion with the Father, under two words, if words may not darken wisdome.

To have communion and Fellowship with the Father, its to be one in common with God; to have Fellowship is to bee Gods Fellow: so is Christ; so are Saints, what-

whatever is the Fathers, is the Sonnes, for they have the Son, and not only so, but they are Sons; and so they have the Father, and are in the Father, in the Spirit, in his Love, in his Life, in his Glory; there is nothing which is the Fathers, but it is the Saints, all is yours; whether *Paul*, or *Apollo*, or *Cephas*, or life, or any thing, all is yours.

O, that you did but know it, that you did but injoy it, although but by Faith; that so you might be saved by *Hope*, then you would wait for the accomplishment of it; *For he that overcommeth shall Inherit all things, and the Second Death shall have no power over him.*

This is to have Communion and Fellowship with the Father, to be one in Common with him, to be the Fathers Fellow in all things, as the Wife is the Husbands.

Secondly, To have Fellowship with *God*, is, to have Fellowship with him in the exchanges of Loves, in the communications of secrets, and heart-discoveries, in participating with each other in all conditions.

Oh! the sweet exchanges of Love, that passes between God, and a soul living in him who is Love.

The Father ever anone breathing forth Love, making more full discoveries of himself in the spirits of Saints; that workes up the soul afresh to admire Mercy, to rejoice in *God*; and the Fathers condition, is a condition of glory at all times; and he is still drawing up the soul of his Son, into the same glory, until he hath perfected him with himselfe in glory: the Son sometimes is in darknesse, but lookes up to the Father, for deliverance; the Father either delivers him immediately, or else gives in an answer of grace, and so will communicate with the soul in the darke, rather than leave it without comfort.

Thus when a Soul once comes into the knowledge of its Union, it presently according to its measure, enioyes Communion and Fellowship, as the Wife with the Husband.

And so God and the Soul being thus united; they now live together, they walk and talke together, they eate and drinke together, they *recreate* themselves in the new and fresh exchanges of Love with each other, but all in the spirit, these words are spirit and life to the soul-experienced; In them therefore, let none judge it blasphemy, through

through their ignorance in the knowledge of it.

And as Saints have Communion thus with the Father, and the Son: so they have communion each with other, in the spirit, which flowes from the same Union; And this Communion is either,

First, In the common enjoyment of all things together in the Spirit; for this is the Saints priviledge, all hath as much right to and in God, as one, although many know it not, and more enjoy it not, because its not manifested in them.

There is no one excellency or enjoyment in God, but its common to all the Saints; they all have a right to it, and in it, each with other: so that Saints have a Fellowship together in the Father; they are all fellowes in the Fathers Love, light, and glory: no one above or superior to each other, although some claime a superiority; They are least in knowledge, its true, God manifests more to some than others, not because they are or shall be more than their brethren, but that they might be helpers to their bretheren.

Christ is no more than a Christian, for al Saints are his Brethren, Heires, Co-heires, joynt

joynt-Heires, and shall see themselves, as he is: so that

First, there is amongst Saints, the Communion of Bretheren in the spirit, fellowes in the spirit; whatever superiority may be amongst men, yet in Christ they are all one:

O, that this were more known in power amongst Saints: And so,

Secondly, from this Unity and Community in the Spirit, flowes sweet Communications of Love, each to other; they are one, and therefore they have fellow-feeling of each others conditions: If one enjoy God sweetly, others rejoyce with him: if one be in darke, or under darke apprehensions of God, others are sensible of it, and as much as may be will be there with him: if one enjoy more Light, and live more in the apprehensions of the Love and liberty of the Gospel, he makes it knowne to others, that so they might have a community with him in it; and this Unity in the spirit, produceth Community in Temporals, as well as Spirituals. *He that seeth his brother to want, and shutteth up the bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him.*

This

This Unity in the Spirit, transformes Souls into the nature, into the *Love of God*; that now he is from a disposition within him not a letter without him, ready to doe good to all, but especially to brethren with him, borne of the same immortall seed, *the word of God, which endures for ever.*

O, that this Communion amongst Saints in the spirit, were more knowne amongst us; that we could see and say indeed, that we are come to the spirits of just men made perfect.

I deny not a Communion with *God* in Ordinances, and a Communion of Saints in the same: *Provided*, it be indeed with *God*, and indeed with Saints, and not with Ordinances instead of *God*, and Ordinances and Men instead of Saints; those who hold Communion under this dispensation, may enjoy God in it, and have Communion each with other as Saints: and I should rather be with them in it, though not under it, than offend them: Yet this I can say, *God* is most satisfactory when enjoyed in the purest light, and nearest relation; and the ends of God in these, are for Creatures good, not his; that souls who as yet cannot come near him, might see him farther off, and so have some

some communion with him, some sweet discoveries of Love from him; and when he intends to draw souls nearer to him, he will then darken those windowes through which perhaps formerly they have seen him, and so at a distance have had some fellowship with him, he will put an end to those fleshly discoveries and apprehensions; and truely Christians, in one respect its but little trouble to me, when I see pretious souls loosing, not their first love, but their first Joy, flowing in through these; by reason of which, they have bin built up in those things without them (though true,) yet now I expect to see some more glorious discoveries of *God*, brought forth in them, and the greater light darkning and out-glorying the lesser.

Meane while saints who are in the spirit, and judge of things after the spirit, hold Communion in the spirit, though under various dispensations, which occasions various apprehensions, yet in the head they are one.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

TRUTH, what it is.

AND deare Christians, there is now a dayes much dispute, I had almost said much discord, about Truth, what it is; and truly did we but once know Truth in the power and glory of it, it would soone end discords amongst us.

I shall at present give forth my apprehensions of it, and that from experience too. I give you the definition of Truth, to the apprehension thus:

God is Truth, and there is no Truth below or besides *God*, without *God*; I question not but that there are true relations of God and dispensations from God, but *God* is the Truth of them, and without him, there is no Truth to any man, no Truth in any man.

Object. *It is said, that Christ is the Truth and the Life?*

Answ. True, but how?

Either First, as he was and is the *True God*, or

or as the True God was in him: ſo he was and is the Truth, as he was the great God, the everlaſting Father, even God bleſſed for ever.

Or Secondly, He was the Truth as he was a diſpenſation of the Father, although the Father, unto the ſons of men; and ſo declared the Love, even the everlaſting Love of Truth, unto his brethern.

Yet, this be pleaſed to note by the way, that although a diſpenſation of Truth bee manifeſted truly in the Son, from, or by the *God of Truth*; yet if thou doſt not ſee and enjoy *God*, who is the Truth of that diſpenſation, it is but a lye in thy ſoul; that there is ſuch a diſpenſation of love to ſinners, is truth; but what is that to him that enjoyes not the *true God in it*.

The like may be ſaid of any other diſpenſation, Ordinances, Prayers, Teares, any actings, though ſuch as the Soul apprehends are commanded by the *true God*: yet if the Soul doe not enjoy God who is Truth in them, which he likewiſe enjoyes without them, if at all, I ſay, they are no truth to ſuch a ſoul: and he that thinkes he knowes *God* and Truth, becauſe he knowes Ordinances, Formes, and duties, &c. not knowing

and

and enjoying the *true God* in all, knowes no Truth at all.

Truly my deare ones, I can in some measure return and see, and say, *all is vanity that mine eyes have beheld, under and below the Sun*; I see *God* to be all, and all things below and besides God is but a like.

And O, that Saints could more come to dwell in *God*, and to see the vanity of all things, otherwise than as they see God in them, and as they are raysed up to that centre: How would this put an end to quarrellings, and contentions about shadowes? catching for the most part at the shaddow, neglecting the substance, or at best, not being so possest with the substance, as to see the shadowes to be but vanity; and so, to see and say, *that the former things are past away*; we are Children and delight to be so feeding on Milke, at the best like Babes, being afraid of stronger Meate; though *Paul, when he was a man put away Childish things*.

Oh, how have, or rather how shall many pretious ones, one day see and say? how have I set up one thing and another for Truth? running from Mountaine, to Hill, from one forme, to another, seeking the living, amongst the dead, perhaps many times

times: but now, loe this is Truth, and there is none else: *This is the Lord, and I have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoyce in his Salvation*; and when once the Vaile is taken away, you will then no more take shaddowes for substance, bondage for liberty; but the *Glorious Lord himselfe* shall be your place of Liberty.

CHAP. IX.

Of the true knowledge of this GOD of TRUTH.

AND as the apprehensions of men have been exceeding various, concerning this *God of Truth*; so for the most part have they knowne him, and judged of him, from exceeding carnall and fleshly grounds; for to know God by his workes, is to know him no otherwaies than a heathen or morall man may know him: its true, *The Heavens declare the Glorie of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy worke, and all the workes of God, wonderfully declare the Glory of God.*

In

In a minde Spiritually *enlightened*, but the works of *God* without us, do not declare *God* as he is in himself, or as he is in *Saints*; but to come *higher*, it's true, *God* is declared in *Scripture*; yet to know *God* no otherwise than as he is declared in *Scripture*, is to know *God* no otherwise than a naturall man may know *him*; to know *God* as he is declared without us, either in word or workes, is no more than a naturall *man* may attain unto. There is no *speech* nor *Language* where one or both of these are not: And accordingly is *God* known, but to know *God* truly and *savingly*, is to know him as he makes known himselfe in the *Spirits* of his *People*, there is no knowledge of *God*, but in his own *light*, *In his light we see light.*

What is that knowledge of *God* to me that another man enjoyes, if I am not one in the same?

For me to speake of *God*, because an other *speakes* of him; and to be able to talke much of *God*, as I reade of him in *Scripture*, not being made one in the same *Truth*; I see and *speake* but what another hath spoken, and so may speake truly sometimes of *God*, but it is by *hear-say*; another mans *truth*, but not mine; and so I doubt many a soule boasts in

another mans *light*; but to know *God*, from a spirituall discovery of himselfe in the *spirits* of his *People*, by which the *Soule* enjoyes what it knowes, and so sees *God* spiritually in all things, and so enjoyes *God* in all things, this knowledge of *God*, is true and exceeding *glorious*.

CHAP. X.

OF THE SCRIPTURE.

CONcerning the *Scripture*, although I shall not question the truth of it, yet I shall propound these three things considerably concerning it.

First, That it is not sufficient in it selfe as it is a *Letter*, or *word* written, to teach or bring any man to the knowledge of *God*; although God be declared in it, yet that declaration, without *God* powerfully working in the declaration of himselfe, to and in the *spirits of men*: They never by this or any other meanes come to the true and saving knowledge of *him*: yet,

Secondly,

Secondly, Some make too much of *Scripture* ſetting it up in the roome of the *Spirit*, and ſo it is indeed become an *Idoll*, not in it ſelfe; but through that *Idolatry* which dwels in the *hearts* of men, for,

Firſt, Some ſay that it is the *Spirit*, and that there is no *Letter* in it: If theſe make it not an *Idoll*, I know not what an *Idoll* is.

Secondly, Others know no other *touchſtone* or tryall, no other *light*, by which they judge of *Truth*: thus putting it in the roome of the *Spirit*, who is *light*, and the greater *light* to make an *Idoll* of it; for they ſay they cannot know *Truth*, untill they bring it to the *letter* for tryall; thus making an *Idoll* of the *Letter*, ſetting it up in the roome of *God*, declaring themſelves, to be exceeding *carnall*, if not without the *Spirit*: For men may be very carnall in their apprehenſions and yet not wholly without the *Spirit*; *Babes in Chriſt*: For he that knowes not *Truth*, but as he reades it *without him*, may much queſtion if he know it all: And this is the *reaſon* men are ſo toſt to and fro; becauſe they are led ſo much by a *Letter* without them, not diſcerning *Truth* in it's own *light*, and ſo according to the different apprehenſions about

the *Letter*, so are men tost to and fro in their judgements; Whereas to know *Truth* from it's own *discovery*, and to judge of it in it's own *light*, establisheth a *soule* for ever; hence it's come to passe, that there is so much blindnesse and darknesse in the things of *God*; so many strange opinions of *God*, and about the things of *God*, in taking up *rules* from, and judgeing of things according to the *letter*, thence is fetcht the *grounds* of all, there it's *hatcht*, and from thence brought forth: there it's *bred* and maintained; not that I say, the faults on *Scripture*, but on mens Idolatrous *lying* and *perfidious hearts* thus to abuse it, in making that use of it, for which it was never written.

Obj. It's said, *Isay.* 8. 20. *To the Law and to the Testimony, if any man speake not according to this word, it is because there is no light in him.*

Answ. True, there is the *Law* and *Testimony* in the *Spirit*, as well as in the *Letter*, *The law of God is in the heart* there it's written, and there it testifies the *truth* of *God*; *And if any man speake not according to this rule, it is because there is no light* or morning risen *in him: The spirituall man judgeth all things, yet he himselfe is judged of no man.*

Obj.

Obj. It's said, *Gal. 6. 16. That who so walketh according to this rule, peace shall be upon him, &c.*

Answ. True, but that is not the *rule* of the *letter*, but of the *Spirit*, even the *rule* of the *new man, Which after God is created in righteousnesse and true holines.* Reade the words before, and you shall see it, there is nothing of any value, but the *new creature: And who so walketh according to this rule, peace shall be upon him, &c.*

And truly Brethren it's my earnest desire to see soules to live more in the *Spirit*, and lesse in the *Letter*, and then they will see that wee judge of the *Letter* by the *Spirit*, and not of the *Spirit* by the *Letter*, which occasions so much ignorance amongst us, and those who professe themselves to be our *teachers*, are chiefe in this trespasse, and how then can they *teach* others, who know not *Truth* themselves, as they say, but as they reade it without them, and so at the best, speake but other mens *light*, and if they misunderstand what other men hath written, then they speake *falshood*, in stead of *Truth*, thus is *Scripture* abused by many, by most in making too much of it, making an *Idoll* of it, Yet,

Thirdly, as *Scripture* is abused by most in

making too much of it: so it is by many in making too little of it, looking on it as a thing of nought, as from the *flesh*, and not as from the *Spirit*, questioning the Truth of it, not acknowledging it to be as it is in it selfe, a *Declaration of God*, *who is Truth*; not that I minde every Letter or circumstance in it, but for the substance of it, as it declares purely the *God of Truth*.

So its without question to me, a *word of Truth*: I know right well that it is not the Word of God in the most strict sence according to what is written in *Job.* 1. 1. yet I know it is that Word in which God is declared; neither that I am ignorant of the possibility, nay the probability of *corruption* in it, and that in the *Greeke* and *Hebrew* too, commonly called the *Originall*; although it be true, no man living ever saw the *Originall copies*, but as it hath been carryed through the hands of *Papists*, and the truth is, we have all from them; and the greatest *Scholars* are as farre from ever seeing the *Originall* copies of *Scriptures*, as any *English*-man, but as their *Fathers* preserved them, and their *Masters* hath taught them; so they know them but no otherwise:

But this is not my rule or ground to judge

judge of *Scripture*, if it were, my *Faith* must depend upon humane testimony as well as others, and then might I well doubt of the *truth* of them.

For to speake after the manner of men, there is no other than humane testimony, and so no other ground of *Faith* in the *Letter*, but a humane *Faith*: For the *Teachers* of the *people* say, it is thus and thus in the *Originall*; when the truth is, they never saw any other *Originall* than came from *Rome*, it was preserved and delivered to them by that trusty Messenger; if he have dealt falsly, then they are *cozened*, for they have no higher ground of *Faith* than this: they tell the people it is thus and thus.

Who told them so?

Why, The *Pope*; and then they tell the *people* its thus in the *Originall*, The case being thus plainly and in truth, it makes many an honest Soul doubt of the truth of it: now notwithstanding all this, there is a way by which Saints may come to judge of *Scripture*, and that according to the *Originall* too, that is by the *Spirit*, which is the *Originall* of all *Truth*.

So that I can looke upon the *Scripture*, and see much glorious *Truth* in it, I cannot but

by experience set to my seal, that it is *Truth*, not that it is any Article of my *Faith*, to believe every word or circumstance there written, but what *Truth* God hath made knowne in me, that I must acknowledge, not condemning that which I know not, though not confirming that which to me is not knowne.

Therefore my exhortation or rather my desire to you Christians, who have slight *thoughts* of it, is; that those *thoughts* of yours might be suspended, and that you owne *Truth*, and acknowledge it where ever you finde it.

Certainly, if once you live in him who is *Truth*, you must owne *Truth*, or rather the true relations of those in whom *Truth* is manifested: I know that the knowledge of any thing without it is nothing, if our *Souls* be not made one with and in the God of *Truth*.

And because *Scripture* is so much abused on both hands, I cannot passe without a word or two further concerning it at present.

First, many of those who are both *Scholars*, and as they say *Teachers* in *England*, affirme; that *Englishmen* never read the *Scripture*,

ture, becauſe they never read it in the *Originall*, that is in *Greeke* and *Hebrew*: Now marke, what ground have men to believe that which they never read nor ſaw, neither is there any ground of *Faith*, for men as men, but the word of a *Prieſt*; which ground is meerly humane, and not binding.

If they ſay we have the *Scripture* in *Engliſh*; then an *Engliſhman* may underſtand *Scripture* as well as them. But if an *Engliſh-man* have the *Scripture* upon humane *Truſt*; then the greateſt *Scholars* have the ſame, for they never ſaw the *Original* copies as you have heard no more than any other *Engliſh man*.

Note further, The *Seventy Tranſlators* ſay in our *Tranſlation* it is thus; Comes another younger brother, and he ſaith it is thus; and ſo contradicts the *Seventy Interpreters* Commanded by the *King* to doe it.

Now who ſhall the ignorant, illiterate *Engliſh man* believe, *Seventy* or one?

Nay, ſuppoſe ſeventy times ſeventy ſay it is otherwiſe, yet who ſhall the poore man believe? I leave it to the judicious to judge.

And now let any conſider if theſe do not truly teach men to deny the *Scripture*, for if Engliſh men have not the *Scripture*, as they ſay, and they themſelves never ſaw it more than

than others; and yet contradict each other in what they have seen: One saith it is thus; another thus: what ground of *Faith* is there for a man in what they say?

Besides, I have seen severall *Greeke* Translations with some contradictions to each other, and some say there are sixteen severall *Greeke* Copies in some things contradicting each other; now which of these is the *Truth* who knowes.

And farther, thus much to me is question-lesse, that the *Scripture* must of necessity suffer violence, in being by man brought so directly into *Grammaticall Rules*: I must confesse I cannot judge that the *Scripture* was ever written according to the strict rules of *Grammar*, as now it is in *Greeke* and *Hebrew*, unlesse any could perswade me to thinke that poor *Fisher-men* and the like were as well furnished with the *Smoake* of the *bottomlesse pit*, as *University men*, and that they spake as truly the Language of the *Beast*, as men now a daies; this have I inserted, not that I intend or desire in the least to derogate from the truth of *Scripture*, but rather that none might abuse it as it is a *Letter*, to live upon it without any further *Seale* or testimony than most receive with it; neither that it

may

may be sleighted on the other hand, nay, that *Soule* cannot slight *Truth*, who is made one and in *Truth*.

And I minde these things the rather because I question not but that some who are well furnished with humanity accounting too highly of it, & yet are *Teachers* of others who are notwithstanding precious to the *Father*, whom he will take off themselves in his time; which is my earnest desire to see effected in them.

CHAP. XII.

The nature and Glory of this knowledge of GOD in the Spirit.

THis knowledge of *God* in the *Spirit*, as he makes known himselfe in us, is exceeding glorious.

First, It is abundantly satisfying and consolating unto the *Soule* made one in him, for to know *God*; so as to know our interest in him, is to know him in whom is all *fulnesse*

neſſe, and ſo it is to know our intereſt in all fulneſſe: for he that truly enjoyes God, truly enjoyes all things, which abundantly ſatisfieth the *Soul* at all times, even as with *marrow and fatneſſe*; it abundantly ſweetens all conditions and diſpenſations from *God*; when once a *Soul* ſees *God*, and enjoyes *God* in all things: The Soul is ſweetly ſatisfied under darke and diſmall diſpenſations, to fleſhly apprehenſions, it can ſweetly rejoyce and ſing in all conditions, giving *Glory to God in the higheſt.*

Secondly, it is of a transforming nature, that *Soul* that truly knowes *God*, is by degrees transformed into the ſame nature and *Glory.*

The knowledge of *God* doth not leave Souls blinde and ignorant, carnall, fooliſh, formal, and vaine; but it makes them partakers of the ſame *Divine Nature*: it gives the Soul not only an intereſt in *God*, that ſo he can ſee *God*, and all his *wiſdome, power, infinitneſſe, Glory, &c.* to be its own: but its made partaker of the very nature of all theſe, and ſo changed into the very *Glory* of all theſe: It's *holy* in the holyneſſe of the *Father*, *wiſe in* the wiſdome of the *Father*, *ſtrong* in the *ſtrength* of the *Father*, *lives* through the *Life*

of

of the Father: *Because I live saith Christ, you shall live also.* So that *souls* made partakers *of God*, are made one in the *nature* and *glory* of *God*; this is mystery indeed to a carnal apprehension, known only of *Souls* taught of *God*, and living in *God*; this likewise makes Souls capable of the knowledge of *Mysterie*, and so able to judge of all things: it's only *the Spiritual mans priviledge*; who looks not so much at the *Letter* for knowledge, as at the *Spirit*, being satisfied in this knowledge of *him* who is the substance of all *Truth*, of all *good*; that though it apprehends not something written, yet it knowes him who is the *Original* of al *Truth*, in whom it enjoyes al fulnesse, *even life for ever.*

Truly friends, did you in any measure apprehend the Glory and excellency of this *knowledge of God*, in you; as he is the Fountaine from whence all flowes, into whom al returnes, you could not be so much satisfied in *streames*, broken *Cisterns*, entertain divisions about *externals*: so much exalt *flesh which is but grasse*, live so low and carnall to a *letter* without you, if once you saw the *righteousnes* of the *Law* fulfilled within you: *so walking not after the* Flesh, *but after the* Spirit.

CHAP

CHAP. XII.

A CHRISTIANS Rule of Obedience.

THE *Spirit* being indeed the prime rule of a *Christians* obedience; its true, wee have done and yet doe looke much after a line, much unto a rule without us, not that I condemne looking into the *Word* written, but when *Souls* know no other Rule of Life, but that without this, argues much fleshlinesse.

The *Spirit* of *God* who is *God*, is the alone Rule of a Spirituall Christian; although a Rule without may be usefull to the weake: *yet the Spirituall man judgeth all things*, by what *Rule*? By the Rule of the *Spirit*, the *Law* in the Old *Testament* was written in *Tables of Stone*. The *Law* of the New *Testament* is written in the *Heart*.

And truely brethren I must tell you; that

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I know no *Covenant* but that in the *Spirit*; and ſo no *Law* but that in the *Spirit*, which is indeed the *Law* of *Life* and liberty, a *Law* condemning, deſtroying fleſh; yet a *Law* in which there is no condemnation to them *in Chriſt*, a *Law* producing obedience, not after the oldneſſe of the *Letter*, but the newneſſe of the *Spirit*, a *Law* of Light by which wee judge and ſquare every act, a *Law* of power, in which we act, a *Law* of Liberty from all other *Lawes*, and condemnations; And this I can tell you by experience, that untill I was delivered from the *fleſh*, into the *Spirit*.

Into this *Law of light, life, liberty and glorie*, I knew not what *Life* and *Liberty* was; talke of it I confeſſe I could, from what I found written without, but not from what I found written within; I could then ſay, I ſhould ſtand faſt for ever: becauſe the *Letter* ſaid, it was the *believers* priviledge: but now I can ſay it, becauſe the *Spirit* hath given in that teſtimony within me; I could then ſtrive to be holy in converſation, to anſwer the *Letter*: but now am I made holy in converſation, from or in the power of the *holy Spirit* within.

Now I ſee that external *actings* according

to

to a rule without is nothing, if not flowing from a principle and power of *life* and *love* within; and it's this *law* in the *Spirit*, that must subdue *flesh* and corruption, if ever it be subdued in you.

I tell thee *dear heart*, the reason why thou art so much overcome with the lusts of the *flesh*, thou art so much unable to subdue thy corruption, it's because thou sets about it in the strength of the *flesh*; thou seest *sinne* by a *letter* without thee, and thou striveſt to reforme thy selfe according to that *Letter*; Doest thou thinke that ever *flesh* is like to subdue *flesh*? No, it's the *Spirit*; O, then give up all to him, *Let thy strength be to sit still* from *fleshly strivings*; waite on the *Spirit*, which will be in thee not only a *light* discovering, but a *fire* consuming *fleshlineſſe* and *fleshly actings*, *Transforming thee* more and more *into the glorious liberty of the sons of God*, which is the longing of thy *Soul*; where thou shalt see thy selfe freed both from *sinne* and *sorrow*, *For the former things are past away*, &c.

Oh! This glorious rule of the *new man*, it's worth thy looking after, and querying into, *One day* heere *is worth a thousand elsewhere*.

Object

Object. *Doe not the Scripture in be new Testament presse men unto duty? And did not the Apostles write their Epistles as rules of life unto the Saints?*

Answ. First, It's true, so may a word written be at present a *Rule* unto a weake *Christian*, who is in some measure made pertaker of the *Spirit*: *Christians* may be carnall, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. weake and yet spirituall, so *Paul*, *I am carnall*; yet *Paul* was spirituall, he had experience of it, through *living* much in the *Spirit*: So that I question not but *souls* may enjoy God, who walkes conscientiously to a *Letter* without, while they are under that dispensation, and truly, it's that which I desire, to see men act rather to a *letter* without them by the *Spirit* within them than to see them flying off the *Letter*, before they are brought off by the power of the *Spirit*: And hence it comes to passe that they are tost in their apprehensions, and so hath no *Law* to walk by, either within them or without them: Its the condition of *many* who flie off the *Letter* upon notion or hearsay of the *Spirit*; and having lost the *Law* in the *letter*, being without it in the *Spirit*, lose all: Therefore my intention in writing, is not to fetch off any from the *Letter*,

but rather to informe you of the mystery of the *Law* in the *Spirit*, that so the same *spirit* working in you, may deliver you into its own light and *glory*.

This one thing I cannot but minde you, that this glorious dispensation in and of the *spirit*, will prove the fall of many in, though not of *Israel*, and that upon these two *Rocks*; either,

First, In opposing, so persecuting the *spirit*; declaring themselves to be but men in the *flesh*, though judging themselves to be in the *spirit*, It's the property of the Sonne of the *Bond-Woman*, to persecute the Sonne of the *Free-Woman*: and *flesh* will oppose *spirit*, till overcome by the *Spirit*.

Secondly, Others in getting only a notion of the *spirit* without the power, will turne carnall and *fleshly* under that notion and so take liberty in *sinne*, under the notion of liberty in *Spirit*; so that in this dispensation of the *spirit* only, will *Saints* leave all the World behinde them: get into what *formes* you will, there will the World be with you; but if once you are delivered out of all *formes* into this glorious liberty, then shall you be in the pure enjoyment of *God* in the *spirit*; *Where shall be no Idolater nor Adulterer*

terer, none that loves or makes a lye; none but those written in the Lambs Booke of life: This is the glorious excellency of the *Law* in the *spirit*, and the excellent *Rule* of the *Christians* obedience, by which they are delivered from all *lawes* of bondage and condemnation, *Into the glorious liberty of the sonnes of God.*

CHAP. XIII.

Of the Mystery of the CROSSE of CHRIST.

THere is much talking of the *Crosse* of Christ, and truly it's a glorious mystery if rightly and truly known; but its to be doubted that many if not most and that of Christians, do look more at the *Crosse* without, than at the Crosse within: not that I deny the knowledge of *Christ* as he died for *sinne*, as a glorious dispensation of the *Father* unto sinners; but that which I desire is to see Christians exercised more in the in-

ternall part and mystery of *Truth*, to know the *crosse* of Christ truly, is to see and know your selves crucified with *Christ*; *I am crucified with Christ*, saith *Paul*, and so can every spirituall Christian say. To be Baptized into the *death* of Christ; to be like him in his death, and in his resurrection, is the way to be like him in his *life*, and in his *glory:* to be crucified with *Christ*, is to suffer the death of *fleshlinesse*, of sinne, and the sinfull nature, as the *flesh* of *Christ* suffered *death* so must our fleshly part dye with Christ, this *death* is to sin, to world, to fleshly wisdome and fleshly *righteousnesse* to all *fleshly* excellency & fleshly *glory*, it must all passe under the Crosse of Christ, and when the *crosse* of *Christ* hath thus past upon all *flesh*, in the spirituall Christian, then shall there be an entering into the *glory* of the *Father*; it's in vaine to talke of the Crosse of Christ in the history, and to be ignorant of it in the *Mystery*; to comfort thy selfe in that Christ dyed for thee, if *flesh* in its glory be still living in thee: O, therefore let thy *soule* seeke to know the *Mystery*, the power and effecacie of the *death* of Christ in thee; that through thy knowledge of thy part in the power of his *death*, thou mayest see and enjoy thy part in his

his Reſurriction and *life*, *For if thou beeſt dead with him, thou ſhalt likewiſe live with him; if thou ſuffer with him, thou ſhalt reigne with him*: and as its the worke of Chriſt in thee thus to deſtroy *fleſh*, ſo queſtionleſſe ſhalt thou finde much ſpiritual oppoſition within thee from *fleſh*, even as Chriſt did from the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, for we wreſtle not only with fleſh and bloud, *&c.*

CHAP. XIIII.

Of the KINGDOME of HEAVEN.

AND as we have been *low and carnall* for the moſt part in our apprehenſions concerning *God*, ſo likewiſe concerning *Heaven*, the habitation of *God*: it's true, *God* is ſaid to dwell in *Heaven*; not that he is confined to any place, but that he dwels in *glory*, and that is *Heaven*: it's true, we have

looked upon *God* to be above the firmament in a glorious place, and there he dwels, that was his place, and that we call *Heaven*; now it's true, that the Scripture speakes of *Heaven*, and *Heaven* in Scripture hath different acceptions, but to speake plainly and properly of the Kingdome of *Heaven*; That Kingdome and that *Heaven* that I intend at present is, the *Heaven* of Gods presence, the *Heaven* of glory, &c.

Now this *Heaven* is, where God manifests himselfe in *love*, there is *Heaven*; it's true God dwels in *Heaven*, *viz.* in *glory* continually, he is never out of *Heaven*, therefore I say,

First, Though *Heaven* is not enjoyed by Saints in all places where *God* is, for God is every where, in *Hell* as well as in *Heaven*, in bad as well as in good, though in a different manner, and so in relation to manifestation, *Heaven* is not every where, yet in relation to God, hee enjoyes himselfe every where, he is in his full glory in darke dispensations to creatures apprehensions, and in respect of God, *Heaven* may be said to be every where, though creatures, nay though Christians many times see it not; for the different appearance of God in creatures produ-

produceth different concluſions in *creatures*; *God* is in all places, it's true, but he is not in all places or men, manifeſting *light* and *love*, and ſo communicating *life* and liberty and glory in all, perhaps he kindles wrath in the ſpirits of ſome, but declares himſelfe a God of love in the ſpirits of others; this is *Heaven*, God manifeſting himſelfe in love and grace, makes *Heaven*; *The Kingdome of Heaven is within you, and it conſiſts not in meate or in drinke, but in righteouſneſſe and peace, and joy in the holy Spirit*; and truly for that fancy of looking after a *Heaven* ſo far away, I know not from whence it firſt came, unleſſe thoſe who are pleaſed to call themſelves *Divines* learned it from *Aſtronomers*, who write of particular Spheres, and ſo they conclude, the higheſt muſt needs be *Heaven*, and there God muſt dwell: Becauſe it's like they never ſaw *God* nor *Heaven*, therefore conclude, they both muſt be in ſome place farre away out of ſight; and it's true ſo they are out of the ſight of men indeed, for never a man as a man did yet ſee, or is ever like to ſee God, or *Heaven*: no my beloved friends, *No man can ſee God and live*; it's true they may ſee his *back-parts*, for God is ſeen in his workes and in all his diſpenſations; but to ſee the *Father*

manifeſting himſelfe as he is infinitely Glorious, Who can ſee him thus and live?

Truly the glorious appearing of the great *God* in his people, will be the death of the firſt man of fleſh; And then the Soul ſees God, and dwells in Heaven: not but that *God* may be ſeen and enjoyed in and through diſpenſations; but this is not the third the higheſt Heaven; thoſe are Tabernacles that muſt vail themſelves, to the glorious viſion, to a greater Glory.

And truly, in vaine doe thoſe Souls talke of and looke after Heaven when they are dead, that doe not know Heaven and live in it while they are a live.

Its common amongſt many, not only of the common and *carnall* ones, but thoſe who profeſſe themſelves *Chriſtians*; that if they can walk in *ſuch a way* as that they may get *Heaven* at laſt, they looke at no more: Alas, *this is a carnall imagination*; if you know not *Heaven now, and live in it now*, you are not like for al that I know, *to live in it hereafter.*

Object. *God ſaith, Heaven is my Throne, the Earth is my Footſtoole, &c,*

Anſw. True, Heaven is Gods Throne, that is, Glory is his Throne, hee ſits there continually; and ſo he ſits Glorioufly in the

the *ſpirits* of his people, there is Heaven too; *and the Earth is his Foot-ſtoole*, that is, all the whole Creation, for it is all but earth to him, (and he formes it out of the earth) it is all his *Foot-ſtoole*, he hath it all in ſubjection to himſelfe, he ſtands upon the neck of it all, and he will bring in ſubjection that Earth and Fleſh in the Spirits of Chriſtians too, which now ſo much trouble them:

A Glorious word, when thy Soul ſhall be able to ſpeake of this by experience, when thou ſhalt ſee all other Heavens and Earth flye away at the preſence of the Lord, even at the preſence of the mighty God of *Jacob*; *Then ſhalt thou be able to ſing new ſongs of praiſe*, who art redeemed from the Earth, and to ſee and ſay: *The Lord God omnipotent reigneth*; And this I can tell thee deare Chriſtian for thy comfort; that as truely as God treads upon all the Earth, and ſubjects all to himſelfe, even thy earthlineſſe within thee is ſubject unto him:

So will he ſubject all earthlineſſe and the powers of darkneſſe unto thee; thou ſhalt tread them all under feet, *the God of peace will tread Satban under feet ſhortly.*

Object. *Paul ſaith, he was in the third Hea-*

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vens, was not that the Heaven of Heavens, a place of Glory above the Firmament?

Answ. Nay, but its true, it was the Heaven of Heavens; that is the highest dispensation of God manifesting himselfe in Glorie.

There are different manifestations and discoveries of God in Glorie, and the lowest is Heaven, where God is enjoyed; although the highest or third Heaven vailes the former Glorie, as the light of the *Sun*, the light of the *Moone* and *Starres*: so that *Paul* was in the highest or most Glorious manifestation of *God* in him, which he calls the *Third Heaven*.

Object. *But it's said, That Heaven is above, and Christ Ascended into Heaven*, &c.

True, *Heaven* is above, that is, above the apprehensions of men, *Eye hath not seen it, eare hath not heard it, neither can it enter into the heart of man to conceive it, but God reveales it to his Saints by his Spirit*; nay further, *Heaven*, is not only above the apprehensions of men, but many Christians live much below the knowledge, much more below the enjoyment of this *Mysterie*; to this purpose see *Pauls* desire for the *Ephesians*, who seemes to be the most knowing people to whom hee writes,

writes, *Ephesians* 1, 16, 17, and *chap.* 3. 18. 19.

Object. *But is there no greater measure or degree of Glory to be expected of Saints after this life?*

Answ. There is no other Glory for the nature of it, than what Saints who enjoy God now, shall ever enjoy, for God himself being now enjoyed, there is nothing else to be enjoyed that is more Glorious; yet,

Secondly, I doe not at present question, but that as there are different Glories, or more ard lesse Glorious manifestations of that one Glorie here, yet when this body of flesh is laid downe; there will be a more compleating or perfecting in this Glory; then shall the Soul be transformed into, and possessed with that Glory, which hath been variously manifested in it formerly, &c.

Quest. *What is the Kingdome of Heaven?*

Answ. The Kingdome of Heaven is *God*, and Saints in *God* are possest with *God*, who is the Kingdome; he is both the King and Kingdome, and Glorie of the Kingdome, Saints made one with and in God; and so being possest with *God*, *God* enjoyes himselfe in them, and they enjoy *God* and Glorie in himselfe; and this is the *Kingdome and the*

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Dominion and Glory given to the Saints; and the Saints possest the Kingdome for ever.

CHAP. XV.

Of PERFECTION.

Quest. *IS it possible for any to attaine perfection in this life?*

Answ. In this Life as we are men, it is true, there is no perfection, there is flesh and fleshly actings: But out of this life (I mean the life of the First *Adam*,) in the Life of the Second, there is nothing else but perfection, though creatures, nay Christians apprehend it not, for the New Creature, *which after God is Created in righteousnesse, and true Holinesse*, is perfect, THE NEW MAN *CHRIST* formed within is perfect, it is true, there is a fleshly part which rebels, yet not defiles the Spirituall; therefore *Paul* could say, *It is no more I, but sinne, and he that is*

is borne of God, sinneth not, his seed of purity and perfection remaines in him.

And according to the measure of the manifestation of Light in the Soul, it is transformed into the Glory of it; and so Souls see their perfection, its true, such a perfection as to be freed from the body of sinne.

I doe not yet see untill this body of flesh be laid downe, yet a perfection according to the measure of the *Souls* changing into the nature and Glory of the *Father*, is to be expected and shall be enjoyed in this *life*

The measure of it I limit not: *Paul* presseth after perfection, and saith: *Let as many as are perfect, be of this minde*, that is, let those who know their perfection in the *inner man*, presse after the accomplishment of it in the finall abolishing of the *flesh*.

Object. *Is this body of flesh capable to prevent the Saints Glory?*

Answ. Yea, to their apprehension, for his body of flesh and the internall part, the body of sinne, being so conjoyned together naturally, that the one is not utterly polished without the other; and those internall fleshly qualities, though so farre subdued as trodden under feet; and the *Soul* can see and say, that they are indeed *nothing*: yet there

there is not such a full Glory, til both these are laid downe for the manifestation of *God* in his full Glory, would end; this body without, as well as within, *Who can see God and live*:

So that in a word, *Saints* as *Saints* are perfect, though not so gloriously perfected in the *Glorious God*, as they shall be.

And the truth is, that the Servants of *Christ*, made one with him, have nothing that I know to make known to people especially to *Christians*: but perfection though men, nay Saints through ignorance are much afraid of this Doctrine.

Yet I say as there is nothing but *perfection* to be pressed after; so there is nothing but *perfection* to be preached; although its true, that those who live in Light speakes perfection as to divers sorts: so in divers Languages, *God* gives the tongue of the *Learned to speake a word in season*, yet al perfection as farre as perfect; and all is to bring Souls up to the enjoyment of perfection; and of this shall Saints be made partakers of in the latter dayes, more than formerly: how might this *Truth*, and it will so where it is enjoyed, carry a Soul more abundantly after perfection, after the enjoyment of the perfect Glory.

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Truely Brethren, this I can ſay experimentally, *that I forget thoſe things which are behinde, and preſſe forward after that price: Not that I am already perfect*, ſo as to ſee all fleſh ended, yet ſo as to ſee all fleſh wounded and dying; that to me is nothing perfect as a Chriſtian, though not as a man in the firſt nature, neither ever expecting ſo to be.

Beloved, it's a low life for a Chriſtian to looke back, that ſo he may fetch comfort out of ſomething paſt; and they are miſerable comforters that adviſe you ſo to doe: though I deny not, but a Soul may be upheld ſometimes under that diſpenſation of looking back: but the greateſt glory of a Chriſtian is before; the *marke*, the *priſe*, is before, and the Soul that ſeeth it preſſeth on, not looking back.

And truly, if once you believed, that the Glory which is prepared for you might bee ſo gloriouſly revealed in you, while you are here; you would then be more earneſt in waiting, in deſiring the manifeſtation of this Glory, if you knew the excellent and Glorious effects of this Spiritual Kingdom, you would then ſay: *Even ſo come Lord Jeſus come quickly*; which is my earneſt and continued deſire, both for my ſelfe and you.

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CHAP. XVI.

Of HELL.

AND as the Soul that enjoyes the apprehensions of the pleased presence of God, lives in Heaven more or lesse according to the measure of enjoyment: so this is hell to be at a distance from the Fathers Love for I looke at Hell to be no more a locall place than Heaven.

But *the Soul living at a distance from the Fathers Glory*, lives truly in darknesse, and so in *Hell*; and this darknesse Hell and misery, is according to the various apprehensions of the Soul concerning *God*, some apprehend more some lesse wrath from the Almighty: now as *God* is the King and Kingdome of of *light* and *life*, so *Sathan* is the King and Kingdome of darknesse, and the God and Prince of the world; and as *God* is the power of *light* and *life*, so is *Sathan* the power of *death* and *darknesse*: as *God* is a power omni-

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preſent inviſible, glorious, and gloriouſly in himſelfe; preſent in all places, ſo is *Satan* the power of darkneſſe, inviſibly preſent in all places; a power raiſed up by the *Father*, yet is not that *Father* of *light* and *life*; one who acts nothing but darkneſſe, with and in whoſe nature all naturall men are *one*, untill renewed and changed by the *Spirit*; that as God dwels manifeſting himſelfe in *Saints*, ſo *Satan* the power and prince of darkneſs dwels in the World; ſo that greater is he that is in the *Saints*, than he that is in the World; yet that power that is manifeſt in the World acts nothing without, a gainſt, or contrary unto the power of *light*, yet the actings of the power of darkneſſe are not Gods actings, though not acted without or contrary to him; for that power that acts without or contrary to the power of *God*, muſt be equall with or above *God*; but there is no ſuch power: Now this power of darkneſſe, lives at a diſtance from the enjoyment of God in *Love* and grace, and ſo lives in *Hell*; and all who are poſſeſſed with and made one in this darkneſſe, lives in *Hell*: Some ſee and feele the *torment*, the *fire* of *Hell* heer; to ſome it's reſerved until hereafter; and it's that which I ſee to be a

truth that there is never a Saint, but have been in *hell*, in some measure, that is, under the power of darknesse.

Object. *It is said that Hell is a place of Torment, that there is fire and brimstone, &c.*

Answ. True, and it is so indeed, but not of materiall *Fire* and *Brimstone*: but Spiritually these three things make up *hell*, and the torment of it.

First, darknesse, *utter darknesse*: so its called in *Scripture*; when the Soul is for ever deprived of any sight or knowledge of God, as a God of Grace and Love, of any Union or Communion with Light and Glory.

Secondly, the Souls constant and perpetuall communion and commerce with darknesse, and his deeds of darknesse, with the powers and effects of darknesse.

Thirdly, God in these kindling the apprehensions of wrath, which will be the torment perpetually: for it is not *Satans* work to torment, but to be tormented; but the breath of the Lord as a streame of *Brimstone* kindles it: for God is the Fire, or kindler of the Fire of *Hell*, God is Fire in the Saints burning up hell and darknesse in them; *for our God is a consuming fire*: but he will be fire, kindling everlasting apprehensions o

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wrath in the ungodly: Oh, consider this, *you that forget God.*

I minde this particular not only,

First, by reason of those carnall and untrue apprehensions generally concerning it, but,

Secondly, to informe Saints in this particular; that so they seeing themselves delivered from this darke and dismal condition, this Kingdome of darknesse into the Kingdome of light, by the power of light, *even into the Kingdome of his deare Son*: May admire *mercy*, and cry, *Grace, Grace*, in its enjoyment of *Grace*, for its the Soul that knowes by experience, what it is to be in the darke, that will prize light; its the Soul that hath been in hell, that will prize Heaven.

In a word, its that Soul that hath beene under the power and Prince of darknesse, being now delivered, will rejoyce in being subject to the King of Glory; that once could say, *Sathan* reigned: but now can say, *The Lord God omnipotent reignes.*

CHAP. XVII.

Particular Application.

THE knowledge of *God* who is the *Mysterie*, is that will put an end to carnall divisions, and dissentions amongst Christians, its that we reade of in *Scripture*, and its that which Christians look for; that the knowledge of *God* shall abound, that warrs, divisions and contentions shall have an end, and that Christians shall serve *God* with one consent; even with one heart:

But how is this like to be accomplished, but in and through this being made one in and with the *mysterie*? When once Souls come to see and know *God* to be all, and that there is nothing without him, all things are nothing but as they are centred in him, and related to him, when they come to know Saints in the Spirit, and no in the *letter*: when they know no man after th

the flesh but after the Spirit; than fleshy and externall things will not occasion divisions.

I minde it thus, one will not say, *I am of Paul; another of Apollo, a third, of Cephas.* One will not be a *Presbyter*, another an *Independant*, a third, an *Anabaptist*, as they are called, that is, they will not looke so much after those Formes, be so fleshly in their knowledge of *Christ*, as to say: *Loe heere, or loe there is Christ*, that is, here or there and no where else, not knowing that he is free in dispensing himselfe not being tyed to, or bound up in any Forme whatsoever; And I cannot passe at present, without speaking something to all Saints under all dispensations; tending to the uniting of al Saints together in the Spirit.

First, you who go under the name of *Presbyterians.* I cannot but judge some amongst you, to be tender and pretious, although I must confesse, that I looke on that Forme, to be one of the lowest where *Christ* may be found; although I question not, but that a right *Presbyterie*, is agreeable to what we finde written in *Scripture*: yet I must tell you, that I know no such *Presbyterie* in the world, much lesse amongst you; And I must

tell you likewiſe, that your principles in many things being ſo low, ſo carnal, as that I am put to a ſtand in conſideration therof; your ignorance in the Covenant of Grace, intailing it to the natural ſeed: Hence Baptizing, or rather cozening your Infants, calling it *the Seal of the Covenant*, though there be no Seal but the Spirit; and none are in that Covenant but Saints: your Miniſters for the moſt part preaching for hire, and you love to have it ſo; making them your Lords, and almoſt your rule of Faith, and practice, deſiring, and endeavouring, could you have your purpoſe, to compel all to walke by your rule, to ſubmit to your *light*: doe you not ſay Chriſt is here in this Forme, and no where elſe; how could you elſe deſire to deal ſo hardly with thoſe who are contrary to you, leaſt you dealt hardly with Chriſt: are you not carnall and walk as men: did you but know that God is not tyed to this or the other Forme, he is neither here nor there limited nor confined; but makes knowne himſelfe, where, when, and how he pleaſeth: did you but know that your Forme is the loweſt of al Forms, that comes near the truth; and therfore the leſſe to be eſteemed, you would not; you could

you could not be ſo exact and rigid in it, nay, you would never continue under the practice of it; behold a little and ſee the evil that is couched under it.

Firſt, it makes your Infants Chriſtians as you ſay, though they never heard of *Chriſt*, is not this a root of bitterneſs, from whence flowes all that groſſe ignorance in the Nation? whence comes thoſe deluſions amongſt the ignorant ones, that they are Chriſtians, &c. But from this Fountain, could you but looke up and downe the Nations, and ſee the wonderfull deluſions of Souls, under this *Antichriſtian* invented Forme: Oh, your hearts would yearne over them, you would have bowels of pitie towards them, thouſands, and ten thouſands, periſhing under deluding Formes: nay, could you but look at home, ſee how you account your ſelves and Children the better for it, and who knowes but that your Children may be deluded under it, as well as others: See again how your *Miniſtery* for the moſt part, ſtands corrupted, not only in admittance, any man almoſt if well furniſhed with Arts, and humane abilities, *the ſmoake of the bottomleſſe pit*, the wiſdome of man, which is darkneſs, ignorance, and folly, with *God*, confeſſing

or owning *Presbytery*, is a meet *Miniſter* in your Society, but likewiſe generally ſeeking themſelves, and not you, but yours; if that faile, they are gone, keeping you ignorant, frighting and firing you, from looking after the knowledge of *God*, further than they teach you; and if you put not into their mouths, they even prepare warre againſt you; which if the Lord did but make you ſenſible of your ignorance and folly in theſe things, from the diſcovery of higher *light*, and *glory*; you would not be ſo ſatisfied, did you but know that there are various diſpenſations from *God* to the Sons of men: did you but know that *God* is a *Spirit*, and that he is the Fountaine, the Light, the Life and fulneſſe of all things, you would not, you could not make ſo much of theſe your carnall things, nor judge ſo hardly and harſhly of thoſe who differ from you: did you but know indeed, that we know but in part, and that its as poſſible for you to erre, as others; you could not ſo earneſtly deſire to confine others to your *Light*, leaſt you might poſſibly lay a burthen of falſhood, and ſin upon them.

In a word, did you but know that *God* is a *Spirit*, *and he will be worſhipped in Spirit*, *and*

and in Truth, and that a Christians obedience is due to none but *Jesus Christ*; which is to be performed by, and in the Law of the Spirit, which is a Law both of Light and power: I say, did you but know this, from being taught by the *Spirit*; you could not, you dare not, usurpe any authority over the consciences of your brethren, but the *Spirit* of *unity*, *love* and *peace*, would rule in you.

Secondly, You who go under the name, and notion of the *Independants*, nay; although its true, I could desire that all the *Saints* were indeed more *Independant* to men, to creatures, to Formes, &c. and more *Dependant* upon the great *God, the rock and refuge of his people*: I must needs tell you, that I see something a misse in you, I am now writing impartially from bowels of tenderneſſe and pitie to all Saints, without reſpect; therefore suffer a word likewiſe,

Firſt, me thinkes I ſee amongſt you, a *Spirit*, almoſt ready to ſay, loe here is *Christ*, *viz.* in this Forme, ready almoſt to deny Communion with any elſe; thus knowing *Christ* after the fleſh, that is, fleſhly Formes; and this knowing Chriſtians after the fleſh, being too carnally rigid in that Forme, and

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no where else, and yet come not up in your Formes, to that Forme of Doctrine prescribed in the *Scripture*, but rather cleave fast unto those invented Ordinances of *men*, who have no better author or Father, than the *Pope*, no better end then deluding *Souls*, *viz. Infants Baptisme*, &c: herein discovering your ignorance in the knowledge of *God*, and the *Covenant of Grace*, which is a *Covenant* in the *Spirit*, and not in the flesh, to and with the *Spirituall*, but not with the natural seed, see *Galath.* 3. 29. Did you but see, that *God* might as well be in other Formes, as this manifesting himselfe, nay; that *God* might be enjoyed without all Formes, you could not in any case be rigid in this *Forme*, nor would you desire the exaltation of it, &c.

And for your Saints likewise, who goe under the name and notion of *Anabaptists*, though for practising as you judge of the *Truth*, according to what is written; and I confesse, you in your practice, to bee in the highest Forme, according to the *Letter*: yet, what I see to be amisse, I must at present tell you, Two things I shall minde you of,

First, Your making too much of formes, though according to the Scripture; that this

this is truth, witneſſe firſt, your readineſſe as ſoon as any to ſay, Loe here is Chriſt, and no where elſe, as if *Chriſt* were tyed to this Forme; that this is truth, witneſſe your unfreeneſſe to owne Chriſt in, or to have Communion with Chriſt in any out of this, nay, calling it the *way of God, &c.* witneſſe your readineſſe to deny Chriſt, to bee *truly, really, ſpiritually* enjoyed, without all Formes, Ordinances, *&c.* witneſſe your making of your Union in the *Letter*, the ground of your Communion in the *Spirit*, not ſeeing Union in the Spirit, to be the alone true and everlaſting ground of Communion in the Spirit. In a word, your too much preferring of one in forme with you, though carnall, before one out of that forme, though Spiritual.

Secondly, your great eſtrangedneſſe unto the *Law* in the *Spirit*, and your too much liveing in the *Law* of the *Letter*: Oh my beloved, did your Souls but know the glorious excellency of the *Law* in the *Spirit*, the glorious light, liberty, and power of it, you could live under the light, liberty and power of no other *Law*.

Oh, it's this *Covenant* in the *Spirit*, that makes Saints glorious in the Spirit, glorious

glorious within, &c. And did you but know that God is not tyed to this, or any Forme, but is free in his dispensation, how he pleaseth; you would not bee thus rigid in your Forme, you would joy to see Christ in any; and the farther the Forme seemes to be from Truth, the more would you rejoyce to finde a Soul there in whom *Christ* is: did you see God to bee the Truth and fulnesse of your Glory: did you see God to be but one, and the Saints Union with, and in that one God, how would your Souls desire, nay, delight to bee one with all the Saints, in that one God, you would see it to be much better to bee one in Spirit, than one in Forme, &c.

And for you Christians, who are for non Churches, denying Formes for want of *Ministers*; Is it not your fault and folly likewise, to thinke and say, Loe here, or loe there is Christ? Are you not apt to say he is in the *Desart*, in the *wildernesse*, in the private *chamber*, and no where else? Do you not see and know, that Christ may as well be with others, under other dispensations, as with you? Do you not likewise know Christ exceedingly after the flesh? Hardly can you judge those to be Christians, which are not

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of your minde, or performe a Spiritual action with thoſe, though Spirituall, that ſute not to your opinion: did you likewiſe know Chriſt more in the *Myſtery*, you could not but know Saints in that *Miſtery*, though differing in their apprehenſions from you, about Externals, or things without.

Thus, my deare and pretious ones in the Spirit, though held much under Formes: do Religion amongſt us conſiſt much in opinion, and according to our opinion, we judge of others? But truly I muſt tell you, the Lord hath taught me to looke at Religion to be another thing than *opinion*, to be religious, is to be poſſeſt with God, which is that beauty from above; and where I ſee a Soul poſſeſt with *God*, living in ſome meaſure in the light and power of Truth, being made conformable unto it: it is not a difference in opinion, that will to me eccliſpe and darken the light and glory of that *Soul*. And truly my deare ones, one thing I cannot but minde you of further, it pities mee to ſee that fleſhly diſpoſition that appeares in many, in moſt amongſt you, *viz.* a readineſſe to watch each other, for evill and not for good; to take all advantages againſt each other therein, to diſcover the naked-

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nesse of each other: Thus one forme watcheth another, and one forme reproacheth and persecuteth another, taketh all advantages to disgrace each other; and thus it's like to bee whilest you live in Formes; this is the very ground and roote of division, what is the reason of it? why if my religion be bound up in a forme, then any other Forme crosseth it, and this is insufferable to a Soul who lives under Formes; and thus will all Formes oppose each other, and all Formes together will oppose the Spirit, *For the sonne of the bond-woman, will persecute the son of the free-woman, and hee that is borne after the flesh, will persecute him that is borne after the Spirit*; and Saints as farre as they are in and after the flesh, will persecute the Spirit.

But I cannot passe without a word to you my brethren likewise, in whom *God* hath in a speciall manner made knowne himselfe; who live above, and perhaps without all Ordinances, living in the enjoyment of *him*, who is the Fountaine and fulnesse of your excellency and glory; yet somewhat have I to say unto you.

First, your readinesse to judge and censure all Light below what you live in, to be nothing; your readinesse to judge and censure

Saints

Saints actings, Saints enjoyment, who live not in your ſphere, calling every thing carnall, that is not to you at preſent Spiritual, not knowing that God may bee enjoyed in that which to us appeares very low. Oh, my brethren conſider, who ſhall beare with the weake if not the ſtrong? Who ſhal be tender to Souls under darke diſpenſations, if not thoſe who live in light? Is God with weake ones, and wil not you? doth God own them in Ordinances, Formes, *&c.* and will not you? Truly, I muſt tell you it flowes from the fleſh, and not from the Spirit, take heed of being exalted above meaſure; I know you have experience that there is a fleſhly exalting principle in you; and it's the work of the Spirit to deſtroy that fleſh; I ſpeak to you, who are indeed Saints in and under a more Spititual diſpenſation, not to thoſe who talke of it without power, who ſcoffe at Saints actings, *&c.* by which it appeares they are indeed men in the fleſh, though judging themſelves men in the Spirit; and thus are many of you as deeply under the power of a cenſuring Spirit, as any who live under Formes and lower diſpenſations, where that principle of Truth is truly ſeated, as every one hath received, ſo let him walk

walke by the ſame rule, it will put an end to thoſe cenſurings and diviſions, about the things of God; it will teach you to bear with, and forbeare one another in Love. In a word, it will make you able to ſee and ſay, that your owne condition not long ſince was the ſame; and truly the Spirituall Chriſtian can ſay, and that by experience, that it is the *Saints* portion to paſſe through various diſpenſations, untill they come to be delivered into the glorious *liberty of the Sons of God.*

And I cannot paſſe without a word in this place to you, who are *Members of the high Court of Parliament*, I meane ſuch amongſt you who are *Members of Jeſus Chriſt*, my word is directed unto none elſe, it's true, God hath called you to Honour, yet your Honour is but to ſerve the Kingdome, and this is Honour enough, and it will be your utmoſt end, who are principled with Honor from above,

Firſt, you know right well, that there is much adoe about Religion, much diviſion and diſcention between particular parties and factions: I muſt tell you, God hath put a power into your hands, if you have but hearts to make uſe of it; by which you may

if

if not reconcile, yet compoſe things into ſuch a way, as that all may have a being, each with other; and truly if your Souls be but truly acquainted with the great God, how that,

Firſt, he hath given the Truth to bee the habitation and being of all his creatures, *He cauſeth the Sun to ſhine on the juſt, and unjuſt.*

Secondly, that he is the Fountaine and fulneſſe of the Saints excellency, however he ſuffers them to run from Mountaine to Hil, however hee ſuffers thoſe fleſhly diviſions amongſt them, yet in concluſion, will hee put an end unto them.

Thirdly, that he hath reſerved dominion and power over the conſciences of men to himſelfe, and will not give his glory to any other; that who ſo uſurp's it, puts himſelfe in the roome of God, and ſaith that he is God, being traytors to the King of Glorie.

Fourthly, that it is his worke to teach men to worſhip him, for he owns no worſhippers but thoſe who worſhip *in Spirit and Truth*; and therefore that thoſe who preſcribe Formes of worſhip to others, unworthily put themſelves in the roome of the Spirit, and that to ſet up uniformity in

formes, is no lesse than the setting up of a carnall formall and fleshly Religion, encouraging in that way of formality, a fleshly formall generation of people. But I trust Right Honorable, honored with that noble Birth from above; by which you have seen the Kingdome of Heaven, and are able to say by experience, that it is a Kingdom not of this world, that it consists not in meate and drinke, not in observations as, touch not, tast not, handle not, not in formes and fleshly uniformitie, in externall prescriptions by men, *but in righteousnesse, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit*; *Spirituall* uniformity, or a unity in that one Spirit; *they who are joyned to the Lord are one Spirit*: you see or shal see that it belongs not to man to punish Heresie, Blasphemy, Athiesme, non conformists, &c. nay you see, or shall see that those who cry out most against Heresie, Blasphemy, &c, call for your assistance to punish with death, are indeed the greatest Hereticks, Blasphemers, and enemies to *Jesus Christ*, and to your and the Kingdomes peace: but it's your worke as far as in you lyeth, to stop the rage and fury of men, and by *Law* to compell them to live peaceably with each other, and with *David*, *to deliver the Lambs*

out

out of the Lyons mouths, and your ſelves to bee patterns of Purity, Piety, meekneſſe, and Love, that ſo you might manifeſt your ſelves *to be the Sons of God, in the midſt of this perverſe and crooked Nation*; and wherein you have been failing in this particular, under what notion or conſideration ſoever, whether from your zeal, or *Covenant*, or the like, the Lord make you truly ſenſible of your ignorance and folly therein; that ſo you may become a bleſſing to the Nation, and a protection to al, eſpecially thoſe who call on the Name of *Jeſus*, of what *opinion* ſoever, who remaine faithfull unto the State; and as your knowledge of God in the *Myſtery*, and your being made one with him in the Spirit, will thus make you Nurſing Fathers to all the Saints without reſpect; ſo likewiſe will it fill you with the diſpenſation of righteouſneſſe, juſtice, and equity, to your brethren; it will not only carry you on in the executing of Juſtice, upon tranſgreſſors, without reſpect, but in delivering this Nation from oppreſſion and oppreſſors, though it hath a long time groaned under both; let the people know that your intentions are to do them right, to ſet them free, &c. looke not ſo much at

former establishments; things formerly might not appeare to be burdens, that now appeare to be heavy and grievous oppressions; harken therefore unto the cry and petitions of the people, who out of sence and experience, apply themselves unto you, it will be not only your policy, but your piety to doe them right; and I must tell you, that if you are possest with a principle from above, you will bee as ready to answer, as the people will bee to aske, such things wherein true equity and liberty consists, and this is that which God will effect in these latter dayes; and if the Kingdome of God be set up within you, you will rejoyce to see a Kingdome of Righteousnesse without you; and that this may be effected, you will not only be forward and free in the execution of Justice upon offenders, at distance from you, but you will bee zealous in the Light and power of that Law in the Spirit, to see Justice executed upon all evill things within you, and evill persons among you, who seeke to pervert the right wayes of God, who instead of bringing forth righteousnes to others, seeke to exalt themselves in others ruine, and to involve the Nation under a farther oppression and Tyrannie: thus

Thus you acting righteouſneſſe and Truth, the righteous God will bee with you, and protect you, *For the righteous God loveth righteouſneſſe*; and this will bee aſſuredly eſtabliſht in this and other Nations, in his owne time.

I muſt likewiſe ſpeake a word to you Officers and Souldiers in the Army, from the higheſt to the loweſt, who know the Lord, or rather are knowne of him; if you are truely acquainted with and live under the power of this Law in the Spirit, your worke will be to preſerve peace, and unity, not only amongſt Saints, but amongſt all, and as God hath done much for you, and by you; ſo in the ſame power ſhall you doe much for the good of the Nation: the Eyes of the Nation are upon you, let yours bee upon them, for good; let it appeare that you are not puffed up with or in your fleſhly exaltations; let not the prolonging of warre, but the ſetling of peace be your endeavour, looke not ſo much at ſetling your ſelves in perpetuall Authority, as in ſetling the Kingdome in her long expected liberty, and peace; let not Saints bee grieved in the beholding of your fleſhly and ſelfe-exalting carriages, in theſe fleſhly preferments and

exaltations in the World, let your end bee the effecting of Gods end; which is liberty, and peace unto the Nation: ſo ſhall you with the reſt be bleſſed in your deed.

Thus have I with much tenderneſſe, and love, applyed a word, I truſt in ſeaſon, to you all who have but taſted how gracious the Lord is, under what diſpenſation ſoever you are, the Lord ſpeaking life and power in you; it may exceedingly tend to the ſetling of your ſelves and the Nation in peace, and the healing of thoſe wounds and breaches amongſt us, *&c.*

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the Spirituall SABBATH.

THere remaineth yet a *Sabbath* to the people of *God*, but this *Sabbath* is *Spirituall*, knowne and enjoyed only by thoſe who live in and after the *Spirit*. A *Sabbath* ſignifieth a reſt, and believers in *Chriſt* enter into this reſt: the reſt of the *Jewiſh Sabbath*, and of

of all the *Jewiſh Sabbaths* of the Land of *Canaan*, &c. was Typicall, and preſented us with the Spiritual reſt of the Goſpel; therefore the Apoſtle, *Hebr.* 4. after he had mentioned both the reſt of the *Sabbath*, and of the Land of *Canaan*, he concludes, *That there yet remaines a reſt to the people of God*, verſ. 9. & verſ. 3. *We that have believed doe enter into this reſt.*

As God finiſhed his worke in ſix daies, and reſted the Seventh, and ſo ceaſed from his worke, to wit, of Creation: ſo when a Soul comes to believe, he enters into *Spirituall reſt*, and ſo keepeth *Sabbath* with the Lord, reſting from his own worke; and this is the Chriſtians *Sabbath*, and holy day, a day of delight and Spirituall ſolace to the Soul who lives in it, a day of Spirituall Liberty, and not of bondage, a day in which the Soul enjoyes all good, in the Fountain; this is that Land of reſt, even the Land of *Canaan*, that promiſed good Land *flowing with milke and honey*, *a Land of Oyle*, *Olives and Butter.*

Oh, this glorious Spiritual Land, were it more knowne, it would be more ſought after; this is the ſubſtance of all thoſe types in the Old Teſtament, this is *Iſraels* Land in

the Spirit, *this is that Land God hath promiſed to gather his people into, in theſe latter dayes, and* David *their King ſhall reigne over them, and bee their Prince for ever.*

My deare brethren, did your Souls but ſee into the glorious reſt of this Spirituall *Sabbath*, into the riches of this glorious Land, the abundance of all *Spirituall* delights, and *Soul*-ſatisfying excellencies, the high honor of the Inhabitants of this Kingdome; all Kings and Prieſts in the *Spirit* to the Lord, and ſhall reigne for ever.

Oh, you could not be ſo taken up in, and poſſeſt with the glories of any externall excellency, or thing without you, it would make you trample under feet all fleſhly honors and dignities, all reſting in any thing ſhort of this reſt: In a word, it would make you ſlight the delights and glories of any Kingdome, of any *Canaan*, ſhort of *Spirituall Canaan*; this Land of Spiritual reſt and *Soul* ſatisfying delight, if you ſaw *Jeſus Chriſt* to be the ſubſtance, the body of thoſe ſhaddowes, from your being gathered up into, and ſo living in, this ſubſtance, this body; it would ſoon end all controverſies in your Spirits, about things below and ſhort of this reſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

Of the SPIRITUALL BAPTISME.

THere is a *Baptiſme* of the *Spirit*, that Saints are to be *Baptized* with, called by *John* a *Baptiſme* of the *Spirit*, and of *Fire*: it's true, we reade of the *Baptiſme* of water, this was *Johns Baptiſme*, of which *John* himſelfe ſaith, *he muſt encreaſe, viz. Chriſt, but I muſt decreaſe*, that is *Johns* Miniſtration; there is likewiſe a *Baptiſme* of afflictions and ſufferings in the fleſh; and this *Chriſt* ſuffered; and this the reſt of his body muſt ſuffer: but there is a *Baptiſme* of the *Spirit*, and it's called *Chriſts Baptiſme*, for theſe reaſons.

Firſt, Becauſe perſons being made partakers of this *Baptiſme* have the Spirit, are made partakers of the *Spirit* of *Chriſt*, *Chriſt* is in them, that is the *Spirit* of *Chriſt*, the

Anoyn-

Anoynting is in them; and thus being *Baptized* into *Chriſt*, they are,

Secondly, *Baptized* into his death, and ſo ſuffer with him the loſſe of all fleſhly excellency, and fleſhly glory; therefore it is called a *Baptiſme* of the *Spirit* and of *Fire*. Beloved, *Jeſus Chriſt* is a Fire where he comes; burning up all the droſſy part of man, hee comes as a Refiners Fire and Fullers Sope, he will throughly purge and refine the *Soul*, where he comes; and the Soul being thus *Baptized* into his death, and all fleſh being buryed with him in *Baptiſme*, it's likewiſe *Baptized* into his Reſurrection and Life, that as it hath been like him in his death, ſo it may alſo be like him in his Reſurrection; and ſo are believers made partakers of a Spirituall Reſurrection with *Jeſus Chriſt*; this is a Reſurrection from Spiritual death, to Spirituall Life, a Reſurrection out of fleſh into Spirit, out of earth into Heaven; this Reſurrection ſhall be compleated at the laſt day, when there ſhall bee a perfect aboliſhing of all fleſh, and ſo an eternall Reſurrection in the Spirit, and an everlaſting deliverance into the perfect and compleat glorious liberty of the Sonnes of God; and being thus *Baptized* with this Spi-

Spirituall *Baptiſme*, into Chriſt they are *Baptized* into his Light, Life, Liberty, Power, Wiſdome and Glory, Eternally.

CHAP. XX.

Of the Spirituall SUPPER.

THere is a *Spirituall Supper*, as well as a *Spirituall Baptiſme*, a *Spirituall* feeding upon *Jeſus Chriſt*, and that as he lives in us: Hence it is that Chriſt ſaith, *My Body is Meat indeed, and my Bloud is drinke indeed, he that eateth my Fleſh and drinketh my Bloud, dwelleth in me, and I in him*, now the Fleſh and Bloud of Chriſt may be ſaid to be meat and drinke indeed; either,

Firſt, in relation to his humane nature, as he was a man dying for ſinners; and ſo man receiving Juſtification from ſin, by the firſt act of Faith, *and ſo peace with God, Rom.* 5. 1. man thus makes a ſweet and ſatisfying *Supper* on the righteouſneſſe of *Jeſus Chriſt*, glorying

rying in this reconciliation and peace with God, but,

Secondly, he is the Christians Supper as he lives in them, in the Spirit, for so hee dwels in them; and this is that Christ principally intends in those words, for he explaines himselfe, *Joh. 6. 63. It is the Spirit that quickneth, the flesh profiteth nothing, the words that I speake, are Spirit and Life*: and indeed not only in this, but in the rest of *Scripture* there is Spirit and Life discovered, if the Lord helps you to see it; now it is this Spirit and Life that quickneth, and it is this Spirit and Life which is the *Spirituall Souls Supper*, and indeed no Supper short of this can satisfie the Spirituall Christian; this is that feast of Fat things promised, *Isa. 25. 6. And made in the Lords Mountaine, even a Feast of Fat things full of Marrow, of Wines on the Lees well refined.*

Oh that rich, glorious, and Soul-satisfying Feast! that those who are thus translated *into the Kingdome of his dear Son*, that are thus called up into this Mountaine, mate in the Spirit with him: here the Soul may eat and drinke, yea drinke abundantly, ful and deep draughts of Spirituall satisfaction and consolation, where it shall for ever be satisfied

fied and ſatiate with the goodneſſe of the Lord; and truly friends, its this hidden *Manna* that everlaſtingly ſatisfieth, it is this bread and water of Life, of which when you have eaten and drunke, you ſhall never hunger or thirſt againe, *but it will be in you a well of water, ſpringing up to everlaſting life.* In a word, its this *Spirituall Supper* that will everlaſtingly ſatisfie your *Souls*, he that is fetcht up into this Mountaine, ſhall dwel on high, bread ſhall be given him, his water ſhall bee ſure, when others are hungry he ſhall eate, when others are thirſty, he ſhall drinke, when others are ſpiritually pained, and by reaſon thereof ſhall cry and howle for ſorrow of heart, *he ſhall ſing forth Spiritual Songs of praiſe for joy, for he ſhall live in the fulneſſe of joy and pleaſure for ever.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

Of the Second Comming of CHRIST.

AND concerning the Second Comming of *Christ*, it is likewise fulfilled in the Spirit, he went away in the flesh that so he might come in the Spirit: Not that I in this place question his comming to put a finall end to all things: but this to mee is without question; that as there was a comming of *Christ* in the flesh, so there is a comming likewise in the Spirit, and that in the discovery of himselfe in the Spirits of his people: he was no sooner gone in the flesh, but hee comes in the Spirit, God makes a glorious appearance in his Flesh, and not only in his Flesh that was, but as it were the *First Fruits*; but he in like manner appeares in the Flesh of all the Saints, for Christ and al Saints make but one Christ, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12.

And

And this is the *Myſterie* of God to appeare in the fleſh of his Son, that is in all the Saints, they are all his Sonne, his anoynted, and this glory is manifeſt in them at the Glorious appearing of the Great God, *even our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* Hence it is that when Chriſt ſpeakes of his Second comming in Glory, *Matth.* 24. 34. *Verily I ſay unto you, that this Generation ſhall not paſſe, till all theſe things be fulfilled*: He did not ſpeake of things far away, but the Glorious appearing of himſelfe in Spirit, behold here is wiſdome, Chriſt comming to Judge all Jewiſh formes and formalities, and to paſſe a ſentence of death upon them all. Chriſt comes Glorioufly in the Goſpel, with the ſound of the Spirituall Trumpet, gathering many Souls from one end of the Heavens to the other: now *Jeruſalem* muſt fall, not only Temporally but Spiritually; and all this was accompliſhed in that Generation: ſo likewiſe the words of Chriſt, *Matth.* 16. 28. *Verily I ſay unto you, there be ſome of you who ſtand heer, that ſhall not taſte of death, till they ſee the Son of man comming in his Kingdom; and they ſaw him comming in his Kingdome, in the Clouds of Heaven, in power and great Glory*, darkning the moſt Glorious diſpenſations in the World,

and

and slaying all flesh before him; and if the appearance of Christ in the Clouds was so Glorious, that is in Ordinances, and dispensations, undermining all the Glory before it. What will his bright appearance effect when he shall appeare as the Sun for brightnesse, transforming Souls into his owne Glory? It's true, the same Truth is now manifest, and he appears in the Clouds of Heaven darkly in the same dispensations; and yet he appeares with power and great Glory, not only to many Souls in and under those dispensations: but likewise to the overturning of all Jewish or Anti-christian Ordinances, or inventions of men, and it's that Saints may comfortably and confidently looke for his more glorious appearance in them; when the light of the Moon, shall be as the light of the Sun, and the light of the Sun seven-fold; this is that Saints enlightned in this Truth: as earnestly expected in the Primitive times, as the Jewes before did his comming in the flesh. *Titus* 2, 13. *Looking for that blessed hope, and the Glorious appearing of the Great God*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 12. *Looking for, and hastning unto the day of God, &c.* And as Christ went away in the flesh, and came againe in the Spirit, and his Second ap-

appearance was with ſo much power, and Glory, conſolation, and ſatisfaction to the Saints, as he ſaith himſelfe, *Joh. 16. 20. Verily I ſay unto you, that yee ſhall weep and lament, and the world ſhall rejoyce, but verſ. 22. I will ſee you againe in the Spirit, and your ſorrow ſhall bee turned into joy, and your joy ſhall no man take from you.*

So likewiſe ſince he hath been along time gone away in the Spirit, and wee have had for the moſt part but a fleſhly ſight, and fleſhly apprehenſions of him: but hee will yet once more appear *not only in the clouds of Heaven, but with much brightneſſe and Glory in the Spirits of his People*; *wherein the earth muſt bee conſumed, and the heavens melt with fervent heat*; Oh therefore looke for him, and behold the Lord whom ye ſeeke, ſhall ſuuddenly come into his people, even as the light ſhines out of the Eaſt into the Weſt, for *to them who looke for him, ſhall be appeare the ſecond time, without ſinne to Salvation, Hebr. 9. 28.* Oh the Glorious workes that he will effect in this his ſecond comming in his *Kingdome*, when he ſhall appeare, we ſhall likewiſe appeare with him in Glory; that this may bee effected: *Even ſo come Lord Jeſus, come quickly*, and let all the Saints ſay, *Amen.*

CHAP. XXII.

Wherein some Grounds tending to UNITIE, *are laid down.*

FIRST, A sencibleneſſe of your owne comming ſhort in the perfection of knowledge; if you ſee that it's poſſible for you to erre; and that there is yet much ignorance in the *myſterie* remaines in you. How can you be bitter and rigid unto thoſe who differ from you? Nay I muſt tell you, that al bitterneſſe flowes from the fleſh, and argues much ignorance to be in that *Soul* in whom it is; that much ignorance yet remaines, I ſhall manifeſt thus:

Thoſe many different apprehenſions about the things of God, argues much ignorance in thoſe things.

Truly my brethren, were you but truly ſenſible of your owne weakneſſe, and ignorance

rance, you will be very ready to beare with the like in others; conſidering likewiſe, that he who differs from you, may bee in the Truth, and you in the errour; that its poſſible for thee *to call evill good, and good evill*: he that knowes not all Truth, may be oppoſite to Truth in another; and if thou ſeeſt that opinion held by thy brother, of which thou haſt experience within thee, that it is an errour; why it may be not long ſince thou waſt in the ſame, or maieſt at preſent be in the like though not the ſame; *Be not high minded, but feare.*

Secondly, Conſider the near relation of Chriſtians, one in that one Eternall Spirit, Brethren, all Children of one Father, one Houſhold, one Family; and oh, *how pleaſant it is for brethren to dwell together in unitie!* Oh how uncomely it is to ſee diviſions and jarrings amongſt brethren! if there be any tenderneſſe of Love, any bowels of compaſſion, thinke of theſe things.

Thirdly, *God* is one with and in al *Saints*, however they are under ſeverall and various diſpenſations, yet the thoughts of God are tender to them; and ſhall thou or I be rigid where the Father manifeſts love, wilt thou be out where the Father is in, wilt thou be

at enmity where the Father is at Unity, if the love of God rule in thee, thou canſt not.

Fourthly, Variance and bitterneſs flowes from beneath, it's of the fleſh, and its earthly, ſenſuall and diveliſh: But wiſdome from above is pure, peaceable, gentle, eaſie to be entreated, &c. *And love will beare all things, believe all things, endure all things, it wil not be harſh, it thinketh, much leſſe ſpeaketh no evill*: Oh this excellent principle of Love! flowing from the Spirit of Love, would quickly put an end to thoſe diviſions and differences amongſt you.

Fiftly, God hath not made thee Judge of, and *Law-giver* to thy brother; he hath reſerved that to himſelfe: he is to walke in that he apprehends to be Truth in himſelfe, and not in thee; *For to his owne Maſter hee ſtandeth or falleth*: he hath not given any man power to be a *Law* to his brother; oh therfore give the ſame liberty to thy brother, thou expecteſt thy ſelfe; *And as thou wouldſt he ſhould doe to thee: ſo doe to him*; In ſo doing ſhall peace and Unity bee abundantly preſerved.

Sixtly, and Finally, It's this Unity in Spirit, though differing in Formes, that

muſt

muſt put an end to wars, and confuſions in the Nation, if ever it be ended.

We talke of ſetling the Kingdome in peace: But I am much miſtaken, if ever it be accompliſhed, unleſſe the Lord teach us to beare with, and forbeare one another. *When once the Mountaine of the Lords Houſe is eſtabliſhed upon the top of all Mountaines; then ſhall Swords and Sphears and all be broken, and men ſhall not learne warre any more.*

Oh therefore my beloved, if you love the peace of the Nation, ſtudy Unity, though differing in Formes; the want of this is the ground of war and bloud; and indeed it is a bloudy principle that dwels in fleſh, the exaltation of its owne fleſhly Formes, although in bloud.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

Some Doubts and Queries anſwered, concerning what hath been formerly ſpoken.

Queſtion, *IS it not the Magiſtrates Duty to ſettle Religion, that all might worſhip God in one way?*

Anſw. Firſt, none can ſettle Religion truly, but he who makes men Religious: Its true, Magiſtrates may ſettle men in Formes, and ſo make them Hipocrits, but none can bring to the true worſhip of God, but himſelfe.

Secondly, *Jeſus Chriſt* hath reſerved that to himſelfe, its his Honor and his Glory, he will not give it to another; and thoſe who thinke to take it from him, are enemies to him; for he is very Jealous of his Glory, and tender of his Saints.

Queſt. *How ſhall they diſpence with their Covenant; wherein they have ſolemnly proteſted in the*

the preſence of the moſt high God, in lifting up their hands to Heaven, to ſettle Religion in the three Kingdomes, according to the Word of God.

Anſw. Firſt, If they have Covenanted to do that which God never called them unto, nay, that which tends directly to the diſthroning of *Jeſus Chriſt*: ſuch a Covenant is better broken than kept: its a ſin to make it, but its a greater ſin to performe it, ignorance in making, but rebellion in obſerving.

But Secondly, That Covenant bindes them to Reforme Religion no otherwiſe but according to the Word of God; now if that be kept cloſe unto, I am ſure the Word of God gives them no Word or Warrant to ſuch a Reformation; Therefore if they act according to the Word of God, they may in the power of God reforme themſelves, and uſe all Lawfull meanes for the reforming of others, which will be in theſe two.

Firſt, In making wholſome Lawes, for the reſtraining of ſinne.

Secondly, By encouraging the preaching of the Goſpel; by which meanes God working, Souls may be reformed.

Queſt. *Doe not univerſall Toleration tend to licentiouſneſſe and fleſhly liberty?*

Anſw. Firſt, For carnall ones as good

be licentious and carnall without, as under a Forme. It's not reſtraint or compulſion into a Forme that makes a man religious: but rather an hipocrite: as good a man periſhed in away of prophanneſſe, as in the way of hipocriſie and formality.

Secondly, The Law might prevent groſſe abominations out-rages, and wickednesſes in ſuch men.

Thirdly, Saints are kept from looſeneſſe by another Law than that without them, even the Law in the Spirit, they cannot ſin becauſe Grace abounds; the Law of the Spirit of life, makes them free from the Law of ſin and death.

Object. *But men will then be of any Religion, and there will be variety of Religion amongſt us?*

Anſw. Its meet it ſhould be ſo; that every one ſhould walke according to what hee is perſwaded, for every man is to be fully perſwaded in his owne minde of what he profeſſeth, and God hath not given power to any man to uſurpe authority over the conſcience of another in this caſe: and if a man periſh in an erronious opinion & practice, its no more than if he had periſhed in any other way, as an hypocrite being compelled thereunto: And its the worke of God

to

to make Saints one in oppinion and practice.

Queſt. *Is it meet for Saints of ſeverall opinions to worſhip God together?*

Anſw. Firſt, If they are ſo farre taught of God as to be ſatisfied that their Communion flowes from their Union in the Spirit, and not in the Letter; they may then in the Spirit comfortably worſhip God together.

But Secondly, If they are ſo farre knit together by Formes, and things without them, that it is a matter of conſcience unto them, they were better forbeare, *For whatſoever is not of Faith is ſinne: Yet to manifeſt and walke in love. For he that dwelleth in God dwelleth in love, for God is Love.*

Queſt. *What is Prayer?*

Anſw. The asking of ſomething of the Father, in the name, in the power of *Chriſt*; of which the Soul is made ſenſible it ſtands in need.

Prayer, it's the worke of the *New man*, which after God is Created, being borne from above; its not fleſhly labour, but the deſire of the Soul, the minde, of the Spirit, and ſpeaking of words for the moſt part is rather for the edification of others, than the Soul it ſelfe; and in this likewiſe have the

Saints

Saints been exceeding formall and cuſtomary as well as in other things, not living ſo much in the Fountaine as in the ſtreams: but when once the Soul comes to know God in, and to live after the Spirit; then it is carryed on under the Law in the Spirit, and ſo worſhips God in Spirit.

Queſt. *What is Preaching?*

Anſw. A declaring forth of the Grace and love of the Father, according to the Souls apprehention and enjoyment, in the light and power of the Spirit, its not to forme up things from the Letter, this a naturall man may do: and many doth: but to bring forth of the treaſury within, *things new and old*; this is to preach the Goſpel, to declare God in Chriſt, for to bee all in the Spirituall Chriſtian: its true, we have gotten a cuſtomary formall way of Preaching, to take a Text and open it, and ſo to ſpeak: not but that its my liberty to ſtoope to the weakneſſe of men in this particular, but this I muſt tel you; that Preaching for the moſt part is become a matter of Art, not only amongſt men, but amongſt Chriſtians too: but to ſpeake of Truth from the enjoyment of Truth, is to ſpeake of it from the more excellent Glory.

Queſt.

Queſt. *What is the end of Preaching?*

Anſw. The end of Preaching as of other Ordinances, is for the bringing up of Souls into the Spirituall enjoyment of God, into the Unity of the Faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man in *Chriſt*; and truly none can thus preach, but thoſe who are in ſome meaſure made acquainted with, and ſo live in this perfection; what may you then thinke of thoſe who are not only ignorant of, but preach and preſſe againſt this Truth, yet account themſelves the Miniſters of *Jeſus Chriſt*?

Beloved, God never gave any externall diſpenſation unto you, to that end you might live for ever in it: but that you might be brought up by it, through and above all to himſelfe; that ſo you might live in him who is the fountain, without thoſe ſtreams; and truly its that I looke for to be effected in the Saints, not to depend upon any Ordinance, as Preaching, &c. but from an enjoyment of God to teach one another, in *Pſalmes, Hymns, and Spirituall Songs, making ſweet melodie in their hearts unto the Lord*; that is, being filled with the Glorious enjoyment of God in their Spirits, they now can doe nothing more but tell of his goodneſſe,

and

and rejoyce in him. Oh that Saints knew more what it is thus to teach each other and thus to make melody in their hearts.

Queſt. *But how may I know that I have the Spirit of God, there being ſo many deluſions in the world, may not I thinke that I am led by the Spirit of God, when it is the Spirit of the divell ſeeing Satban can transforme himſelfe into an Angel of light?*

Anſw. Firſt, the Glorious appearance and manifeſtation of God in man, layes low the fleſh, that which tends to the abaſing of the Creature, and to the exaltation of God, that layeth the Creature low, and ſetteth up God high, is of God; for fleſh never abaſeth it ſelfe: but its the worke of the Spirit, to lay low the fleſh; and its this Glorious appearance of God in pulling downe all high and fleſhly exaltations in the fleſh, will be the exaltation of God, *and the Lord alone ſhall be exalted in that day, &c.*

But Secondly, Although its true, there is like to be much Spirituall deluſion, yet the Spirit of God is no deluding Spirit, *but its the Spirit of Truth and light*: ſo that where it is Glorioufly working, it diſcovers it ſelfe; there is no ſeeing of the Spirit, but in its owne light: *In thy light ſhall we ſee light*; it

a Light that expells darkneſſe and igno-
ance, throwes downe the fleſh, transforms
he Soul into its owne nature, fils it with
umility, Love, patience, and a univerſall
onformity to *Jeſus Chriſt*, both within and
ithout; and therefore thoſe who talke of
he Spirit, and yet are ignorant, proud, car-
all, prophane, earthly, &c. much deceive
hemſelves; its a Spirit from beneath and
ot from above: for if the Soul bee experi-
entally poſſeſt with God, he is made con-
ormable to him; but if with the Spirit of
arkneſſe, its made more and more confor-
ble unto it, &c.

Thus my dearely beloved have I made ſo
old to ſpeake a word, and I truſt in ſeaſon
o all ſorts of Saints, under what diſpenſa-
ion ſoever, and that from much tenderneſs
f Love, and bowels of pitie and compaſſi-
n unto you, that if poſſible you might bee
ulled out of that fire of diviſion that is a-
ongſt us: I have ſent abroad and freely
iſtributed this ſmall, and I thinke my laſt
ite into the Common-Treaſury, not on-
y for information in the *Myſterie* of Truth,
ut for the uniting of Saints together in
hat one *Myſterie*; and if it by Providence
ome into the hands of any Chriſtian,
though

though not under thoſe diſpenſations mentioned; yet to them its directed as well as others, for my deſire in it is the Generall good, and if thou findeſt any thing in it either contrary to, or above thy apprehenſion, be not harſh to cenſure, but waite: be not high minded but feare: be not bitter but of a patient Spirit: *as every one hath received ſo let him walke by the ſame rule*; and if any be contrary minded, God will reveale it in his time. Thus at preſent my friends farewell.

The encreaſe of Grace, Peace, Love, and the Spirit of meekneſſe, patience, and forbearance, bee multiplyed upon you, and manifeſted in you, more and more, untill you come to be compleated in him, who filleth All in All.

FINIS.